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D R E D ;

A

TALE OF THE GREAT DISMAL SWAMP.

BY

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE,

AUTHOR OF "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN."

"Away to the Dismal Swamp he speeds,—
His path was rugged and sore,
Through tangled juniper, beds of reeds,
Through many a fen, where the serpent feeds,
And man never trod before.

And, when on the earth he sunk to sleep,
If slumber his eyelids knew,
He lay where the deadly vine doth weep
Its venomous tears, that nightly steep
The flesh with blistering dew."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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CHAPTER I.

LIFE IN THE SWAMPS.

OUR readers will perhaps feel an interest to turn back with us, and follow the singular wanderings of the mysterious personage, whose wild denunciations had so disturbed the minds of the worshippers at the camp-meeting.

There is a twilight-ground between the boundaries of the sane and insane, which the old Greeks and Romans regarded with a peculiar veneration. They held a person whose faculties were thus darkened as walking under the awful shadow of a supernatural presence ; and, as the mysterious secrets of the stars only become visible in the night, so in these eclipses of the more material faculties they held there was often an awakening of supernatural perceptions.

The hot and positive light of our modern materialism, which exhales from the growth of our existence every dew-drop, which searches out and dries every rivulet of romance, which sends an unsparing beam into every cool grotto of poetic possibility, withering the moss, and turning the dropping cave to a dusty den — this spirit, so remorseless, allows us no such indefinite land. There are but two words in the whole department of modern anthropology — the sane and the insane ; the latter dismissed from human reckoning almost with contempt. We should find it difficult to give a suitable name to the strange and abnormal condition in which this singular being, of whom we are speaking, passed the most of his time.

It was a state of exaltation and trance, which yet appeared not at all to impede the exercise of his outward and

physical faculties, but rather to give them a preternatural keenness and intensity, such as sometimes attends the more completely-developed phenomena of somnambulism.

In regard to his physical system there was also much that was peculiar. Our readers may imagine a human body of the largest and keenest vitality, to grow up so completely under the nursing influences of nature, that it may seem to be as perfectly *en rapport* with them as a tree ; so that the rain, the wind, and the thunder, all those forces from which human beings generally seek shelter, seem to hold with it a kind of fellowship, and to be familiar companions of existence.

Such was the case with Dred. So completely had he come into sympathy and communion with nature, and with those forms of it which more particularly surrounded him in the swamps, that he moved about among them with as much ease as a lady treads her Turkey carpet. What would seem to us in recital to be incredible hardship, was to him but an ordinary condition of existence. To walk knee-deep in the spongy soil of the swamp, to force his way through thickets, to lie all night sinking in the porous soil, or to crouch, like the alligator, among reeds and rushes, were to him situations of as much comfort as well-curtained beds and pillows are to us.

It is not to be denied, that there is in this savage perfection of the natural organs a keen and almost fierce delight, which must excel the softest seductions of luxury. Anybody who has ever watched the eager zest with which the hunting-dog plunges through the woods, darts through the thicket, or dives into water, in an ecstasy of enjoyment, sees something of what such vital force must be.

Dred was under the inspiring belief that he was the subject of visions and supernatural communications. The African race are said by mesmerists to possess, in the fullest degree, that peculiar temperament which fits them for the evolution of mesmeric phenomena ; and hence the existence among them, to this day, of men and women who are

supposed to have peculiar magical powers. The grandfather of Dred, on his mother's side, had been one of these reputed African sorcerers; and he had early discovered in the boy this peculiar species of temperament. He had taught him the secret of snake-charming, and had possessed his mind from childhood with expectations of prophetic and supernatural impulses. That mysterious and singular gift, whatever it may be, which Highland seers denominate second sight, is a very common tradition among the negroes; and there are not wanting thousands of reputed instances among them to confirm belief in it. What this faculty may be, we shall not pretend to say. Whether there be in the soul a yet undeveloped attribute, which is to be to the future what memory is to the past, or whether in some individuals an extremely high and perfect condition of the sensuous organization endows them with something of that certainty of instinctive discrimination which belongs to animals, are things which we shall not venture to decide upon.

It was, however, an absolute fact with regard to Dred, that he had often escaped danger by means of a peculiarity of this kind. He had been warned from particular places where the hunters had lain in wait for him; had foreseen in times of want where game might be ensnared, and received intimations where persons were to be found in whom he might safely confide; and his predictions with regard to persons and things had often chanced to be so strikingly true, as to invest his sayings with a singular awe and importance among his associates.

It was a remarkable fact, but one not peculiar to this case alone, that the mysterious exaltation of mind in this individual seemed to run parallel with the current of shrewd, practical sense; and, like a man who converses alternately in two languages, he would speak now the language of exaltation, and now that of common life, interchangeably. This peculiarity imparted a singular and grotesque effect to his whole personality.

On the night of the camp-meeting, he was, as we have

already seen, in a state of the highest ecstasy. The wanton murder of his associate seemed to flood his soul with an awful tide of emotion, as a thunder-cloud is filled and shaken by slow-gathering electricity. And, although the distance from his retreat to the camp-ground was nearly fifteen miles, most of it through what seemed to be impassable swamps, yet he performed it with as little consciousness of fatigue as if he had been a spirit. Even had he been perceived at that time, it is probable that he could no more have been taken, or bound, than the demoniac of Gadara.

After he parted from Harry, he pursued his way to the interior of the swamp, as was his usual habit, repeating to himself, in a chanting voice, such words of prophetic writ as were familiar to him.

The day had been sultry, and it was now an hour or two past midnight, when a thunder-storm, which had long been gathering and muttering in the distant sky, began to develop its forces.

A low, shivering sigh crept through the woods, and swayed in weird whistlings the tops of the pines; and sharp arrows of lightning came glittering down among the darkness of the branches, as if sent from the bow of some warlike angel. An army of heavy clouds swept in a moment across the moon; then came a broad, dazzling, blinding sheet of flame, concentrating itself on the top of a tall pine near where Dred was standing, and in a moment shivered all its branches to the ground, as a child strips the leaves from a twig. Dred clapped his hands with a fierce delight; and, while the rain and wind were howling and hissing around him, he shouted aloud:

“Wake, O, arm of the Lord! Awake, put on thy strength! The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars—yea, the cedars of Lebanon! The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire! The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh! Hail-stones and coals of fire!”

The storm, which howled around him, bent the forest like

a reed, and large trees, uprooted from the spongy and tremulous soil, fell crashing with a tremendous noise ; but, as if he had been a dark spirit of the tempest, he shouted and exulted.

The perception of such awful power seemed to animate him, and yet to excite in his soul an impatience that He whose power was so infinite did not awake to judgment.

“Rend the heavens,” he cried, “and come down ! Avenge the innocent blood ! Cast forth thine arrows, and slay them ! Shoot out thy lightnings, and destroy them !”

His soul seemed to kindle with almost a fierce impatience, at the toleration of that Almighty Being, who, having the power to blast and to burn, so silently endures. Could Dred have possessed himself of those lightnings, what would have stood before him ? But his cry, like the cry of thousands, only went up to stand in waiting till an awful coming day !

Gradually the storm passed by ; the big drops dashed less and less frequently ; a softer breeze passed through the forest, with a patter like the clapping of a thousand little wings ; and the moon occasionally looked over the silvery battlements of the great clouds.

As Dred was starting to go forward, one of these clear revealings showed him the cowering form of a man, crouched at the root of a tree, a few paces in front of him. He was evidently a fugitive, and, in fact, was the one of whose escape to the swamps the Georgia trader had complained on the day of the meeting.

“Who is here, at this time of night ?” said Dred, coming up to him.

“I have lost my way,” said the other. “I don’t know where I am !”

“A runaway ?” inquired Dred.

“Don’t betray me !” said the other, apprehensively.

“Betray you ! Would *I* do that ?” said Dred. “How did you get into the swamp ?”

“I got away from a soul-driver’s camp, that was taking us on through the states.”

“O, O!” said Dred. “Camp-meeting and driver’s camp right alongside of each other! Shepherds that sell the flock, and pick the bones! Well, come, old man; I’ll take you home with me.”

“I’m pretty much beat out,” said the man. “It’s been up over my knees every step; and I didn’t know but they’d set the dogs after me. If they do, I’ll let ’em kill me, and done with it, for I’m ’bout ready to have it over with. I got free once, and got clear up to New York, and got me a little bit of a house, and a wife and two children, with a little money beforehand; and then they nabbed me, and sent me back again, and mas’r sold me to the drivers, — and I believe I’s ’bout as good’s die. There’s no use in trying to live — everything going agin a body so!”

“Die! No, indeed, you won’t,” said Dred; “not if I’ve got hold of you! Take heart, man, take heart! Before morning I’ll put you where the dogs can’t find you, nor anything else. Come, up with you!”

The man rose up, and made an effort to follow; but, wearied, and unused as he was to the choked and perplexed way, he stumbled and fell almost every minute.

“How now, brother?” said Dred. “This won’t do! I must put you over my shoulder as I have many a buck before now!” And, suiting the action to the word, he put the man on his back, and, bidding him hold fast to him, went on, picking his way as if he scarcely perceived his weight.

It was now between two and three o’clock, and the clouds, gradually dispersing, allowed the full light of the moon to slide down here and there through the wet and shivering foliage. No sound was heard, save the humming of insects and the crackling plunges by which Dred made his way forward.

“You must be pretty strong!” said his companion. “Have you been in the swamps long?”

“Yes,” said the other, “I have been a wild man — every

man's hand against me — a companion of the dragons and the owls, this many a year. I have made my bed with the leviathan, among the reeds and the rushes. I have found the alligators and the snakes better neighbors than Christians. They let those alone that let them alone ; but Christians will hunt for the precious life."

After about an hour of steady travelling, Dred arrived at the outskirts of the island which we have described. For about twenty paces before he reached it, he waded waist-deep in water. Creeping out, at last, and telling the other one to follow him, he began carefully coursing along on his hands and knees, giving, at the same time, a long, shrill, peculiar whistle. It was responded to by a similar sound, which seemed to proceed through the bushes. After a while, a crackling noise was heard, as of some animal, which gradually seemed to come nearer and nearer to them, till finally a large water-dog emerged from the underbrush, and began testifying his joy at the arrival of the new comer, by most extravagant gambols.

"So, ho ! Buck ! quiet, my boy !" said Dred. "Show us the way in !"

The dog, as if understanding the words, immediately turned into the thicket, and Dred and his companion followed him, on their hands and knees. The path wound up and down the brushwood, through many sharp turnings, till at last it ceased altogether, at the roots of a tree ; and, while the dog disappeared among the brushwood, Dred climbed the tree, and directed his companion to follow him, and, proceeding out on to one of the longest limbs, he sprang nimbly on to the ground in the cleared space which we have before described.

His wife was standing waiting for him, and threw herself upon him with a cry of joy.

"O, you 've come back ! I thought, sure enough, dey 'd got you dis time !"

"Not yet ! I must continue till the opening of the seals — till the vision cometh ! Have ye buried him ?"

“No ; there’s a grave dug down yonder, and he’s been carried there.”

“Come, then !” said Dred.

At a distant part of the clearing was a blasted cedar-tree, all whose natural foliage had perished. But it was veiled from head to foot in long wreaths of the tillandsia, the parasitic moss of these regions, and, in the dim light of the approaching dawn, might have formed no unapt resemblance to a gigantic spectre dressed in mourning weeds.

Beneath this tree Dred had interred, from time to time, the bodies of fugitives which he found dead in the swamps, attaching to this disposition of them some peculiar superstitious idea.

The widow of the dead, the wife of Dred, and the new comer, were now gathered around the shallow grave ; for the soil was such as scarcely gave room to make a place deep enough for a grave without its becoming filled with water.

The dawn was just commencing a dim foreshadowing in the sky. The moon and stars were still shining.

Dred stood and looked up, and spoke, in a solemn voice.

“Seek him that maketh Arcturus and Orion — that turneth the shadow of death into morning ! Behold those lights in the sky — the lights in his hands pierced for the sins of the world, and spread forth as on a cross ! But the day shall come that he shall lay down the yoke, and he will bear the sin of the world no longer. Then shall come the great judgment. He will lay righteousness to the line and judgment to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuges of lies.”

He stooped, and, lifting the body, laid him in the grave, and at this moment the wife broke into a loud lament.

“Hush, woman !” said Dred, raising his hand. “Weep ye not for the dead, neither bewail him ; but weep ye sore for the living ! He must rest till the rest of his brethren be killed ; for the vision is sealed up for an appointed time. If it tarry, wait for it. It shall surely come, and shall not tarry !”

CHAPTER II.

MORE SUMMER TALK.

A GLORIOUS morning, washed by the tears of last night's shower, rose like a bride upon Canema. The rain-drops sparkled and winked from leaf to leaf, or fell in showery diamonds in the breeze. The breath of numberless roses, now in full bloom, rose in clouds to the windows.

The breakfast-table, with its clean damask, glittering silver, and fragrant coffee, received the last evening's participants of the camp-meeting in fresh morning spirits, ready to discuss, as an every-day affair, what, the evening before, they had felt too deeply, perhaps, to discuss.

On the way home, they had spoken of the scenes of the day, and wondered and speculated on the singular incident which closed it. But, of all the dark circle of woe and crime, — of all that valley of vision which was present to the mind of him who spoke, — they were as practically ignorant as the dwellers of the curtained boudoirs of New York are of the fearful mysteries of the Five Points.

The aristocratic nature of society at the South so completely segregates people of a certain position in life from any acquaintance with the movements of human nature in circles below them, that the most fearful things may be transacting in their vicinity unknown or unnoticed. The horrors and sorrows of the slave-coffle were a sealed book to Nina and Anne Clayton. They had scarcely dreamed of them; and Uncle John, if he knew their existence, took very good care to keep out of their way, as he would turn from any other painful and disagreeable scene.

All of them had heard something of negro-hunters, and regarded them as low, vulgar people, but troubled their heads little further on the subject ; so that they would have been quite at a loss for the discovery of any national sins that could have appropriately drawn down the denunciations of Heaven.

The serious thoughts and aspirations which might have risen in any of the company, the evening before, assumed, with everything else, quite another light under the rays of morning.

All of us must have had experience, in our own histories, of the great difference between the night and the morning view of the same subject.

What we have thought and said in the august presence of witnessing stars, or beneath the holy shadows of moonlight, seems with the hot, dry light of next day's sun to take wings, and rise to heaven with the night's clear drops. If all the prayers and good resolutions which are laid down on sleeping pillows could be found there on awaking, the world would be better than it is.

Of this Uncle John Gordon had experience, as he sat himself down at the breakfast-table. The night before, he realized, in some dim wise, that he, Mr. John Gordon, was not merely a fat, elderly gentleman, in blue coat and white vest, whose great object in existence was to eat well, drink well, sleep well, wear clean linen, and keep out of the way of trouble. He had within him a tumult of yearnings and aspirings, — uprisings of that great, life-long sleeper, which we call *soul*, and which, when it wakes, is an awfully clamorous, craving, exacting, troublesome inmate, and which is therefore generally put asleep again in the shortest time, by whatever opiates may come to hand. Last night, urged on by this troublesome guest, stimulated by the vague power of such awful words as judgment and eternity, he had gone out and knelt down as a mourner for sin and a seeker for salvation, both words standing for very real and awful facts ; and, this morning, although it was

probably a more sensible and appropriate thing than most of the things he was in the habit of doing, he was almost ashamed of it. The question arose, at table, whether another excursion should be made to the camp-ground.

"For my part," said Aunt Maria, "I hope you'll not go again, Mr. Gordon. I think you had better keep out of the way of such things. I really was vexed to see you in that rabble of such very common people!"

"You'll observe," said Uncle John, "that, when Mrs. G. goes to heaven, she'll notify the Lord, forthwith, that she has only been accustomed to the most select circles, and requests to be admitted at the front door."

"It is n't because I object to being with common people," said Anne Clayton, "that I dislike this custom of going to the altar; but it seems to me an invasion of that privacy and reserve which belong to our most sacred feelings. Besides, there are in a crowd coarse, rude, disagreeable people, with whom it is n't pleasant to come in contact."

"For my part," said Mrs. John Gordon, "I don't believe in it at all! It's a mere temporary excitement. People go and get wonderfully wrought up, come away, and are just what they were before."

"Well," said Clayton, "is n't it better to be wrought up once in a while, than *never* to have any religious feelings? Is n't it better to have a vivid impression of the vastness and worth of the soul, — of the power of an endless life, — for a few hours once a year, than never to feel it at all? The multitudes of those people, there, never hear or think a word of these things at any other time in their lives. For my part," he added, "I don't see why it's a thing to be ashamed of, if Mr. Gordon or I should have knelt at the altar last night, even if we do not feel like it this morning. We are too often ashamed of our better moments; — I believe Protestant Christians are the only people on earth who are ashamed of the outward recognition of their religion. The Mahometan will prostrate himself in the street, or wherever he happens to be when his hour for prayer

comes. The Roman Catholic sailor, or soldier, kneels down at the sound of the vesper bell. But we rather take pride in having it understood that we take our religion moderately and coolly, and that we are not going to put ourselves much out about it."

"Well, but, brother," said Anne, "I will maintain, still, that there is a reserve about these things which belongs to the best Christians. And did not our Saviour tell us that our prayers and alms should be in secret?"

"I do not deny at all what you say, Anne," said Clayton; "but I think what I said is true, notwithstanding; and, both being true, of course, in some way they must be consistent with each other."

"I think," said Nina, "the sound of the singing at these camp-meetings is really quite spirit-stirring and exciting."

"Yes," said Clayton, "these wild tunes, and the hymns with which they are associated, form a kind of forest liturgy, in which the feelings of thousands of hearts have been embodied. Some of the tunes seem to me to have been caught from the song of birds, or from the rushing of wind among the branches. They possess a peculiar rhythmical energy, well suited to express the vehement emotions of the masses. Did camp-meetings do no other good than to scatter among the people these hymns and tunes, I should consider them to be of inestimable value."

"I must say," said Anne, "I always had a prejudice against that class both of hymns and tunes."

"You misjudge them," said Clayton, "as you refined, cultivated women always do, who are brought up in the kid-slipper and carpet view of human life. But just imagine only the old Greek or Roman peasantry elevated to the level of one of these hymns. Take, for example, a verse of one I heard them sing last night:

'The earth shall be dissolved like snow,
The sun shall cease to shine,
But God, who called me here below,
Shall be forever mine.'

What faith is there ! What confidence in immortality ! How could a man feel it, and not be ennobled ? Then, what a rough, hearty heroism was in that first hymn ! It was right manly ! ”

“ Ah, but,” said Anne, “ half the time they sing them without the slightest perception of their meaning, or the least idea of being influenced by them.”

“ And so do the worshippers in the sleepest and most aristocratic churches,” said Clayton. “ That ’s nothing peculiar to the camp-ground. But, if it is true, what a certain statesman once said, ‘ Let me make the ballads of the people, and I care not who makes their laws,’ it is certainly a great gain to have such noble sentiments as many of these hymns contain, circulating freely among the people.”

“ What upon earth,” said Uncle John, “ do you suppose that last fellow was about, up in the clouds, there ? Nobody seemed to know where he was, or *who* he was ; and I thought his discourse seemed to be rather an unexpected addition. He put it into us pretty strong, I thought ! Declare, such a bundle of woes and curses I never heard distributed ! Seemed to have done up all the old prophets into one bundle, and tumbled it down upon our heads ! Some of them were quite superstitious about it, and began talking about warnings, and all that.”

“ Pooh ! ” said Aunt Maria, “ the likelihood is that some itinerant poor preacher has fallen upon this trick for producing a sensation. There is no end to the trickeries and the got-up scenes in these camp-meetings, just to produce effect. If I had had a pistol, I should like to have fired into the tree, and see whether I could n’t have changed his tune.”

“ It seemed to me,” said Clayton, “ from the little that I did hear, that there was some method in his madness. It was one of the most singular and impressive voices I ever heard ; and, really, the enunciation of some of those latter things was tremendous. But, then, in the universal license and general confusion of the scene, the thing was not so much to be wondered at. It would be the most

natural thing in the world, that some crazy fanatic should be heated almost to the point of insanity by the scene, and take this way of unburthening himself. Such excitements most generally assume the form of denunciation."

"Well, now," said Nina, "to tell the truth, I should like to go out again to-day. It's a lovely ride, and I like to be in the woods. And, then, I like to walk around among the tents, and hear the people talk, and see all the different specimens of human nature that are there. I never saw such a gathering together in my life."

"Agreed!" said Uncle John. "I'll go with you. After all, Clayton, here, has got the right of it, when he says a fellow ought n't to be ashamed of his religion, such as it is."

"Such as it is, to be sure!" said Aunt Maria, sarcastically.

"Yes, I say again, such as it is!" said Uncle John, bracing himself. "I don't pretend it's much. We'll all of us bear to be a good deal better, without danger of being translated. Now, as to this being converted, hang me if I know how to get at it! I suppose that it is something like an electric shock,—if a fellow is going to get it, he must go up to the machine!"

"Well," said Nina, "you do hear some queer things there. Don't you remember that jolly, slashing-looking fellow, whom they called Bill Dakin, that came up there with his two dogs? In the afternoon, after the regular services, we went to one of the tents where there was a very noisy prayer-meeting going on, and there was Bill Dakin, on his knees, with his hands clasped, and the tears rolling down his cheeks; and father Bonnie was praying over him with all his might. And what do you think he said? He said, 'O, Lord, here's Bill Dakin; he is converted; now take him right to heaven, now he is ready, or he'll be drunk again in two weeks!'"

"Well," said Anne Clayton, tossing her head, indignantly, "that's blasphemy, in my opinion."

"O, perhaps not," said Clayton, "any more than the clownish talk of any of our servants is intentional rudeness."

"Well," said Anne, "don't you think it shows a great want of perception?"

"Certainly, it does," said Clayton. "It shows great rudeness and coarseness of fibre, and is not at all to be commended. But still we are not to judge of it by the rules of cultivated society. In well-trained minds every faculty keeps its due boundaries; but, in this kind of wild-forest growth, mirthfulness will sometimes overgrow reverence, just as the yellow jessamine will completely smother a tree. A great many of the ordinances of the old Mosaic dispensation were intended to counteract this very tendency."

"Well," said Nina, "did you notice poor Old Tiff, so intent upon getting his children converted? He didn't seem to have the least thought or reference to getting into heaven himself. The only thing with him was to get those children in. Tiff seems to me just like those mistletoes that we see on the trees in the swamps. He don't seem to have any root of his own; he seems to grow out of something else."

"Those children are very pretty-looking, genteel children," said Anne; "and how well they were dressed!"

"My dear," said Nina, "Tiff prostrates himself at my shrine, every time he meets me, to implore my favorable supervision as to that point; and it really is diverting to hear him talk. The old Caliban has an eye for color, and a sense of what is suitable, equal to any French milliner. I assure you, my dear, I always was reputed for having a talent for dress; and Tiff *appreciates* me. Isn't it charming of him? I declare, when I see the old creature lugging about those children, I always think of an ugly old cactus with its blossoms. I believe he verily thinks they belong to him just as much. Their father is entirely dismissed from Tiff's calculations. Evidently all he wants of him is to

keep out of the way, and let him work. The whole burden of their education lies on his shoulders."

"For my part," said Aunt Nesbit, "I'm glad you've faith to believe in those children. I have n't; they'll be sure to turn out badly—you see if they don't."

"And I think," said Aunt Maria, "we have enough to do with our own servants, without taking all these miserable whites on our hands, too."

"I'm not going to take all the whites," said Nina. "I'm going to take these children."

"I wish you joy!" said Aunt Maria.

"I wonder," said Aunt Nesbit, "if Harry is under concern of mind. He seems to be dreadfully down, this morning."

"Is he?" said Nina. "I had n't noticed it."

"Well," said Uncle John, "perhaps he'll get set up, to-day—who knows? In fact, I hope I shall myself. I tell you what it is, parson," said he, laying his hand on Clayton's shoulder, "you should take the gig, to-day, and drive this little sinner, and let me go with the ladies. Of course you know Mrs. G. engrosses my whole soul; but, then, there's a kind of insensible improvement that comes from such celestial bodies as Miss Anne, here, that ought n't to be denied to me. The clergy ought to enumerate female influence among the means of grace. I'm sure there's nothing builds me up like it."

Clayton, of course, assented very readily to this arrangement; and the party was adjusted on this basis.

"Look ye here, now, Clayton," said Uncle John, tipping him a sly wink, after he had handed Nina in, "you must confess that little penitent! She wants a spiritual director, my boy! I tell you what, Clayton, there is n't a girl like that in North Carolina. There's blood, sir, there. You must humor her on the bit, and give her her head a while. Ah, but she'll draw well at last! I always like a creature that kicks to pieces harness, wagon, and all, to begin with. They do the best when they are broken in."

With which profound remarks Uncle John turned to hand Anne Clayton to the carriage.

Clayton understood too well what he was about to make any such use of the interview as Uncle John had suggested. He knew perfectly that his best chance, with a nature so restless as Nina's, was to keep up a sense of perfect freedom in all their intercourse ; and, therefore, no grandfather could have been more collected and easy in a tête-à-tête drive than he. The last conversation at the camp-meeting he knew had brought them much nearer to each other than they had ever stood before, because both had spoken in deep earnestness of feeling of what lay deepest in their hearts ; and one such moment he well knew was of more binding force than a hundred nominal betrothals.

The morning was one of those perfect ones which succeed a thunder-shower in the night ; when the air, cleared of every gross vapor, and impregnated with moist exhalations from the woods, is both balmy and stimulating. The steaming air developed to the full the balsamic properties of the pine-groves through which they rode ; and, where the road skirted the swampy land, the light fell slanting on the leaves of the deciduous trees, rustling and dripping with the last night's shower. The heavens were full of those brilliant, island-like clouds, which are said to be a peculiarity of American skies, in their distinct relief above the intense blue. At a long distance they caught the sound of camp-meeting hymns. But, before they reached the ground, they saw, in more than one riotous group, the result of too frequent an application to Abijah Skinflint's department, and others of a similar character. They visited the quarters of Old Tiff, whom they found busy ironing some clothes for the baby, which he had washed and hung out the night before. The preaching had not yet commenced, and the party walked about among the tents. Women were busy cooking and washing dishes under the trees ; and there was a great deal of good-natured gossiping.

One of the most remarkable features of the day was a

sermon from father Dickson, on the sins of the church. It concluded with a most forcible and solemn appeal to all on the subject of slavery. He reminded both the Methodists and Presbyterians that their books of discipline had most pointedly and unequivocally condemned it; that John Wesley had denounced it as the sum of all villanies, and that the general assemblies of the Presbyterian church had condemned it as wholly inconsistent with the religion of Christ, with the great law which requires us to love others as ourselves. He related the scene which he had lately witnessed in the slave-coffle. He spoke of the horrors of the inter-state slave-trade, and drew a touching picture of the separation of families, and the rending of all domestic and social ties, which resulted from it; and, alluding to the unknown speaker of the evening before, told his audience that he had discerned a deep significance in his words, and that he feared, if there was not immediate repentance and reformation, the land would yet be given up to the visitations of divine wrath. As he spoke with feeling, he awakened feeling in return. Many were affected even to tears; but, when the sermon was over, it seemed to melt away, as a wave flows back again into the sea. It was far easier to join in a temporary whirlwind of excitement, than to take into consideration troublesome, difficult, and expensive reforms.

Yet, still, it is due to the degenerate Christianity of the slave states to say, that, during the long period in which the church there has been corrupting itself, and lowering its standard of right to meet a depraved institution, there have not been wanting, from time to time, noble confessors, who have spoken for God and humanity. For many years they were listened to with that kind of pensive tolerance which men give when they acknowledge their fault without any intention of mending. Of late years, however, the lines have been drawn more sharply, and such witnesses have spoken in peril of their lives; so that now seldom a voice arises except in approbation of oppression.

The sermon was fruitful of much discussion in different parts of the camp-ground; and none, perhaps, was louder in the approbation of it than the Georgia trader, who, seated on Abijah's Skinflint's counter, declared: "That was a *parson* as *was* a parson, and that he liked his *pluck*; and, for his part, when ministers and church-members would give over buying, he should take up some other trade."

"That was a very good sermon," said Nina, "and I believe every word of it. But, then, what do you suppose *we* ought to do?"

"Why," said Clayton, "we ought to contemplate emancipation as a future certainty, and prepare our people in the shortest possible time."

This conversation took place as the party were seated at their nooning under the trees, around an unpacked hamper of cold provisions, which they were leisurely discussing.

"Why, bless my soul, Clayton," said Uncle John, "I don't see the sense of such an anathema maranatha as we got to-day. Good Lord, what earthly harm are we doing? As to our niggers, they are better off than we are! I say it coolly — that is, as coolly as a man can say anything between one and two o'clock, in such weather as this. Why, look at my niggers! Do *I* ever have any chickens, or eggs, or cucumbers? No, to be sure. All *my* chickens die, and the cut-worm plays the devil with *my* cucumbers; but the niggers have enough. *Theirs* flourish like a green bay tree; and of course I have to buy of *them*. *They* raise chickens. *I* buy 'em, and cook 'em, and then *they* eat 'em! That's the way it goes. As to the slave-coffles, and slave-prisons, and the trade, why, that's abominable, to be sure. But, Lord bless you, *I* don't want it done! I'd kick a trader off my door-steps forthwith, though I'm all eaten up with woolly-heads, like locusts. I don't like such sermons, for my part."

"Well," said Aunt Nesbit, "our Mr. Titmarsh preached quite another way when I attended church in E——. He

proved that slavery was a scriptural institution, and established by God."

"I should think anybody's common sense would show that a thing which works so poorly for both sides could n't be from God," said Nina.

"Who is Mr. Titmarsh?" said Clayton to her, aside.

"O, one of Aunt Nesbit's favorites, and one of my aversions! He is n't a *man* — he's nothing but a theological dictionary with a cravat on! I can't bear him!"

"Now, people may talk as much as they please of the educated democracy of the north," said Uncle John. "I don't like 'em. What do working-men want of education? — Ruins 'em! I've heard of their learned blacksmiths bothering around, neglecting their work, to make speeches. I don't like such things. It raises them above their sphere. And there's nothing going on up in those Northern States but a constant confusion and hubbub. All sorts of heresies come from the North, and infidelity, and the Lord knows what! We have peace, down here. To be sure, our poor whites are in a devil of a fix; but we have n't got 'em under yet. We shall get 'em in, one of these days, with our niggers, and then all will be contentment."

"Yes," said Nina, "there's Uncle John's view of the millennium!"

"To be sure," said Uncle John, "the lower classes want *governing* — they want care; that's what they want. And all they need to know is, what the Episcopal church catechism says, 'to learn and labor truly to get their own living in the state wherein it has pleased God to call them.' That makes a well-behaved lower class, and a handsome, gentlemanly, orderly state of society. The upper classes ought to be instructed in their duties. They ought to be considerate and condescending, and all that. That's my view of society."

"Then you are no republican," said Clayton.

"Bless you, yes, I am! I believe in the equality of *gen-*

lemen, and the equal rights of well-bred people. That's my idea of a republic."

Clayton, Nina, and Anne, laughed.

"Now," said Nina, "to see uncle so jovial and free, and 'Hail fellow well met,' with everybody, you'd think he was the greatest democrat that ever walked. But, you see, it's only because he's so immeasurably certain of his superior position—that's all. He isn't afraid to kneel at the altar with Bill Dakin, or Jim Sykes, because he's so sure that his position can't be compromised."

"Besides that, chick," said Uncle John, "I *have* the sense to know that, in my Maker's presence, all human differences are child's play." And Uncle John spoke with a momentary solemnity which was heartfelt.

It was agreed by the party that they would not stay to attend the evening exercises. The novelty of the effect was over, and Aunt Nesbit spoke of the bad effects of falling dew and night air. Accordingly, as soon as the air was sufficiently cooled to make riding practicable, the party were again on their way home.

The woodland path was streaked with green and golden bands of light thrown between the tree-trunks across the way, and the trees reverberated with the evening song of birds. Nina and Clayton naturally fell into a quiet and subdued train of conversation.

"It is strange," said Nina, "these talkings and searchings about religion. Now, there are people who have something they call religion, which I don't think does them any good. It isn't of any use—it doesn't make them better—and it makes them very disagreeable. I would rather be as I am, than to have what they call religion. But, then, there are others that have something which I know *is* religion; something that I know I have not; something that I'd give all the world to have, and don't know how to get. Now, there was Livy Ray—you ought to have seen Livy Ray—there was something so superior about her; and, what was extraordinary is, that she was

good without being *stupid*. What do you suppose the reason is that good people are generally so stupid?"

"A great deal," said Clayton, "is called goodness, which is nothing but want of force. A person is said to have self-government simply because he has nothing to govern. They talk about self-denial, when their desires are so weak that one course is about as easy to them as another. Such people easily fall into a religious routine, get by heart a set of phrases, and make, as you say, very stupid, good people."

"Now, Livy," said Nina, "was remarkable. She had that kind of education that they give girls in New England, stronger and more like a man's than ours. She could read Greek and Latin as easily as she could French and Italian. She was keen, shrewd, and witty, and had a kind of wild grace about her, like these grape-vines; yet she was so *strong*! Well, do you know, I almost worship Livy? And I think, the little while she was in our school, she did me more good than all the teachers and studying put together. Why, it does one good to know that such people are possible. Don't you think it does?"

"Yes," said Clayton; "all the good in the world is done by the personality of people. Now, in books, it is n't so much what you learn from them, as the contact it gives you with the personality of the writer, that improves you. A real book always makes you feel that there is more in the writer than anything that he has said."

"That," said Nina, eagerly, "is just the way I feel toward Livy. She seems to me like a mine. When I was with her the longest, I always felt as if I had n't half seen her. She always made me hungry to know her more. I mean to read you some of her letters, some time. She writes beautiful letters; and I appreciate that very much, because I can't do it. I can talk better than I can write. Somehow my ideas will not take a course down through my arms; they always will run up to my mouth. But you ought to see Livy; such people always make me very dis-

contented with myself. I don't know what the reason is that I like to see superior people, and things, when they always make me realize what a poor concern I am. Now, the first time I heard Jenny Lind sing, it spoiled all my music and all my songs for me, — turned them all to trash at one stroke, — and yet I liked it. But I don't seem to have got any further in goodness than just dissatisfaction with myself."

"Well," said Clayton, "there's where the foundation-stone of all excellence is laid. The very first blessing that Christ pronounced was on those who were poor in spirit. The indispensable condition to all progress in art, science, or religion, is to feel that we have nothing."

"Do you know," said Nina, after something of a pause, "that I can't help wondering what you took up with me for? I have thought very often that you ought to have Livy Ray."

"Well, I'm much obliged to you," said Clayton, "for your consideration in providing for me. But, supposing I should prefer my own choice, after all? We men are a little wilful, sometimes, like you of the gentler sex."

"Well," said Nina, "if you *will* have the bad taste, then, to insist on liking me, let me warn you that you don't know what you are about. I'm a very unformed, unpractical person. I don't keep accounts. I'm nothing at all of a housekeeper. I shall leave open drawers, and scatter papers, and forget the day of the month, and tear the newspaper, and do everything else that is wicked; and then, one of these days, it will be, 'Nina, why have n't you done this? and why have n't you done that? and why don't you do the other? and why *do* you do something else?' Ah, I've heard you men talk before! And, then, you see, I shan't like it, and I shan't behave well. Have n't the least hope of it; won't ever engage to! — So, now, won't you take warning?"

"No," said Clayton, looking at her with a curious kind of smile, "I don't think I shall."

“How dreadfully positive and self-willed men are!” said Nina, drawing a long breath, and pretending to laugh.

“There’s so little of that in you ladies,” said Clayton, “we have to do it for both.”

“So, then,” said Nina, looking round with a half-laugh and half-blush, “you *will* persist?”

“Yes, you wicked little witch!” said Clayton, “since you challenge me, I *will*.” And, as he spoke, he passed his arm round Nina firmly, and fixed his eyes on hers. “Come, now, my little Baltimore oriole, have I caught you?” And — But we are making our chapter too long.

CHAPTER III.

MILLY'S RETURN.

THE visit of Clayton and his sister, like all other pleasant things, had its end. Clayton was called back to his law-office and books, and Anne went to make some summer visits previous to her going to Clayton's plantation of Magnolia Grove, where she was to superintend his various schemes for the improvement of his negroes.

Although it was gravely insisted to the last that there was no *engagement* between Nina and Clayton, it became evident enough to all parties that only the name was wanting. The warmest possible friendship existed between Nina and Anne; and, notwithstanding that Nina almost every day said something which crossed Anne's nicely-adjusted views, and notwithstanding Anne had a gentle infusion of that disposition to sermonize which often exists in very excellent young ladies, still the two got on excellently well together.

It is to be confessed that, the week after they left, Nina was rather restless and lonesome, and troubled to pass her time. An incident, which we shall relate, however, gave her something to think of, and opens a new page in our story.

While sitting on the veranda, after breakfast, her attention was called by various exclamations from the negro department, on the right side of the mansion; and, looking out, to her great surprise, she saw Milly standing amid a group, who were surrounding her with eager demonstrations. Immediately she ran down the steps to inquire what it might mean. Approaching nearer, she was somewhat startled to see that her old friend had her head bound up

and her arm in a sling; and, as she came towards her, she observed that she seemed to walk with difficulty, with a gait quite different from her usual firm, hilarious tread.

"Why, Milly!" she said, running towards her with eagerness, "what is the matter?"

"Not much, chile, I reckon, now I's got home!" said Milly.

"Well, but what's the matter with your arm?"

"No great! Dat ar man shot me; but, praise de Lord, he did n't kill me! I don't owe him no grudge; but I thought it wan't right and fit that I should be treated so; and so I just *put*!"

"Why, come in the house this minute!" said Nina, laying hold of her friend, and drawing her towards the steps. "It's a shame! Come in, Milly, come in! That man! I *knew* he was n't to be trusted. So, this is the good place he found for you, is it?"

"Jes so," said Tomtit, who, at the head of a dark stream of young juveniles, came after, with a towel hanging over one arm, and a knife half cleaned in his hand, while Rose and Old Hundred, and several others, followed to the veranda.

"Laws-a-me!" said Aunt Rose, "just to think on't! Dat's what 't is for old fam'lies to hire der niggers out to common people!"

"Well," said Old Hundred, "Milly was allers too high feelin'; held her head up too much. An't no ways surprised at it!"

"O, go 'long, you old hominy-beetle!" said Aunt Rose "Don't know nobody dat holds up der head higher nor you does!"

Nina, after having dismissed the special train of the juveniles and servants, began to examine into the condition of her friend. The arm had evidently been grazed by a bullet, producing somewhat of a deep flesh-wound, which had been aggravated by the heat of the weather and the fatigue which she had undergone. On removing the

bandage around her head, a number of deep and severe flesh-cuts were perceived.

"What's all this?" said Nina.

"It's whar he hit me over de head! He was in drink, chile; he did n't well know what he was 'bout!"

"What an abominable shame!" said Nina. "Look here," turning round to Aunt Nesbit, "see what comes of hiring Milly out!"

"I am sure I don't know what's to be done!" said Aunt Nesbit, pitifully.

"Done! why, of course, these are to be bandaged and put up, in the first place," said Nina, bustling about with great promptness, tearing off bandages, and ringing for warm water. "Aunt Milly, I'll do them up for you myself. I'm a pretty good nurse, when I set about it."

"Bless *you*, chile, but it seems good to get home 'mong friends!"

"Yes; and you won't go away again in a hurry!" said Nina, as she proceeded rapidly with her undertaking, washing and bandaging the wound. "There, now," she said, "you look something like; and now you shall lie down in my room, and take a little rest!"

"Thank ye, honey, chile, but I'll go to my own room; 'pears like it's more home like," said Milly. And Nina, with her usual energy, waited on her there, closed the blinds, and spread a shawl over her after she had lain down, and, after charging her two or three times to go to sleep and be quiet, she left her. She could hardly wait to have her get through her nap, so full was she of the matter, and so interested to learn the particulars of her story.

"A pretty business, indeed!" she said to Aunt Nesbit. "We'll prosecute those people, and make them pay dear for it."

"That will be a great expense," said Aunt Nesbit, apprehensively, "besides the loss of her time."

"Well," said Nina, "I shall write to Clayton about it directly. I know he'll feel just as I do. He understands

the law, and all about those things, and he 'll know how to manage it."

"Everything will make expense!" said Aunt Nesbit, in a deplorable voice. "I 'm sure misfortunes never come single! Now, if she don't go back, I shall lose her wages! And here 's all the expenses of a law-suit, besides! I think she ought to have been more careful."

"Why, aunt, for pity's sake, you don't pretend that you wish Milly to go back?"

"O, no, of course I don't; but, then, it's a pity. It will be a great loss, every way."

"Why, aunt, you really talk as if you did n't think of anything but your loss. You don't seem to think anything about what *Milly* has had to suffer!"

"Why, of course, I feel sorry for that," said Aunt Nesbit. "I wonder if she is going to be laid up long. I wish, on the whole, I had hired out one that was n't quite so useful to me."

"Now, if that is n't just like her!" said Nina, in an indignant tone, as she flung out of the room, and went to look softly in at Milly's door. "Never can see, hear, or think, of anything but herself, no matter what happens! I wonder why Milly could n't have belonged to me!"

After two or three hours' sleep, Milly came out of her room, seeming much better. A perfectly vigorous physical system, and vital powers all moving in the finest order, enabled her to endure much more than ordinary; and Nina soon became satisfied that no material injury had been sustained, and that in a few days she would be quite recovered.

"And now, Milly, do pray tell me where you have been," said Nina, "and what this is all about."

"Why, you see, honey, I was hired to Mr. Barker, and dey said 'he was a mighty nice man;' and so he was, honey, most times; but, den, you see, honey, dere 's some folks dere 's *two* men in 'em, — one is a good one, and t' oder is

very bad. Well, dis yer was just dat sort. You see, honey, I would n't go for to say dat he got drunk; but he was dat sort dat if he took ever so little, it made him kind o' ugly and cross, and so dere wan't no suiting him. Well, his wife, she was pretty far; and so he was, too, 'cept in spots. He was one of dese yer streaked men, dat has drefful ugly streaks; and, some of dem times, de Lord only knows what he won't do! Well, you see, honey, I thought I was getting along right well, at first, and I was mighty pleased. But dere was one day he came home, and 'peared like dere could n't nobody suit him. Well, you see, dey had a gal dere, and she had a chile, and dis yer chile was a little thing. It got playing with a little burnt stick, and it blacked one of his clean shirts, I had just hung up, — for I'd been ironing, you see. Just den he came along, and you never heerd a man go on so! I's heerd bad talk afore, but I never heerd no sich! He swore he'd kill de chile; and I thought my soul he would! De por little thing run behind me, and I just kep him off on it, 'cause I knowed he wan't fit to touch it; and den he turned on me, and he got a cow-hide, and he beat me over de head. I thought my soul he'd kill me! But I got to de door, and shut de chile out, and Hannah, she took it and run with it. But, bless you, it 'peared like he was a tiger, — screeching, and foaming, and beating me! I broke away from him, and run. He just caught de rifle, — he always kep one loaded, — and shot at me, and de ball just struck my arm, and glanced off again. Bless de Lord, it did n't break it. Dat ar was a mighty close run, I can tell you! But I did run, 'cause, thinks I, dere an't no safety for me in dat ar house; and, you see, I run till I got to de bush, and den I got to whar dere was some free colored folks, and dey did it up, and kep me a day or two. Den I started and came home, just as you told me to."

"Well," said Nina, "you did well to come home; and I tell you what, I'm going to have that man prosecuted!"

"O, laws, no, Miss Nina! don't you goes doing nothing

to him ! His wife is a mighty nice woman, and 'peared like he did n't rightly know what he was 'bout."

"Yes, but, Milly, you ought to be willing, because it may make him more careful with other people."

"Laws, Miss Nina, why, dere is some sense in dat ; but I would n't do it as bearing malice."

"Not at all," said Nina. "I shall write to Mr. Clayton, and take his advice about it."

"He 's a good man," said Milly. "He won't say nothing dat an't right. I spect dat will do very well, dat ar way."

"Yes," said Nina, "such people must be taught that the law will take hold of them. That will bring them to their bearings !"

Nina went immediately to her room, and despatched a long letter to Clayton, full of all the particulars, and begging his immediate assistance.

Our readers, those who have been in similar circumstances, will not wonder that Clayton saw in this letter an immediate call of duty to go to Canema. In fact, as soon as the letter could go to him, and he could perform a rapid horseback journey, he was once more a member of the domestic circle.

He entered upon the case with great confidence and enthusiasm.

"It is a debt which we owe," he said, "to the character of our state, and to the purity of our institutions, to prove the efficiency of the law in behalf of that class of our population whose helplessness places them more particularly under our protection. They are to us in the condition of children under age ; and any violation of their rights should be more particularly attended to."

He went immediately to the neighboring town, where Milly had been employed, and found, fortunately, that the principal facts had been subject to the inspection of white witnesses.

A woman, who had been hired to do some sewing, had

been in the next room during the whole time ; and Milly's flight from the house, and the man's firing after her, had been observed by some workmen in the neighborhood. Everything, therefore, promised well, and the suit was entered forthwith.

II.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE TRIAL.

"WELL, now," said Frank Russel, to one or two lawyers with whom he was sitting, in a side-room of the courthouse at E., "look out for breakers! Clayton has mounted his war-horse, and is coming upon us, now, like leviathan from the rushes."

"Clayton is a good fellow," said one of them. "I like him, though he does n't talk much."

"Good?" said Russel, taking his cigar from his mouth; "why, as the backwoodsmen say, he an't nothing else! He is a great seventy-four pounder, charged to the muzzle with goodness! But, if he should be once fired off, I'm afraid he'll carry everything out of the world with him. Because, you see, abstract goodness does n't suit our present mortal condition. But it is a perfect godsend that he has such a case as this to manage for his maiden plea, because it just falls in with his heroic turn. Why, when I heard of it, I assure you I bestirred myself. I went about, and got Smithers, and Jones, and Peters, to put off suits, so as to give him fair field and full play. For, if he succeeds in this, it may give him so good a conceit of the law, that he will keep on with it."

"Why," said the other, "don't he like the law? What's the matter with the law?"

"O, nothing, only Clayton has got one of those ethereal stomachs that rise against almost everything in this world. Now, there is n't more than one case in a dozen that he'll undertake. He sticks and catches just like an old bureau

drawer. Some conscientious crick in his back is always taking him at a critical moment, and so he is knocked up for actual work. But this defending a slave-woman will suit him to a T."

"She is a nice creature, is n't she?" said one of them.

"And belongs to a good old family," said another.

"Yes," said the third, "and I understand his lady-love has something to do with the case."

"Yes," said Russel, "to be sure she has. The woman belongs to a family connection of hers, I'm told. Miss Gordon is a spicy little puss—one that would be apt to resent anything of that sort; and the Gordons are a very influential family. He is sure to get the case, though I'm not clear that the law is on his side, by any means."

"Not?" said the other barrister, who went by the name of Will Jones.

"No," said Russel. "In fact, I'm pretty clear it is n't. But that will make no odds. When Clayton is thoroughly waked up, he is a whole team, I can tell you. He'll take jury and judge along with him, fast enough."

"I wonder," said one, "that Barker did n't compound the matter."

"O, Barker is one of the stubbed sort. You know these middling kind of people always have a spite against old families. He makes fight because it is the Gordons, that's all. And there comes in his republicanism. He is n't going to be whipped in by the Gordons. Barker has got Scotch blood in him, and he'll hang on to the case like death."

"Clayton will make a good speech," said Jones.

"Speech? that he will!" said Russel. "Bless me, I could lay off a good speech on it, myself. Because, you see, it really was quite an outrage; and the woman is a presentable creature. And, then, there's the humane dodge; that can be taken, beside all the chivalry part of defending the helpless, and all that sort of thing. I would n't ask for a better thing to work up into a speech.

But Clayton will do it better yet, because he is actually sincere in it. And, after all 's said and done, there 's a good deal in that. When a fellow speaks in solemn earnest, he gives a kind of weight that you can't easily get at any other way."

"Well, but," said one, "I don't understand you, Russel, why you think the law is n't on Clayton's side. I'm sure it 's a very clear case of terrible abuse."

"O, certainly it is," said Russel, "and the man is a dolt, and a brute beast, and ought to be shot, and so forth ; but, then, he has n't really exceeded his legal limits, because, you see, the law gives to the hirer all the rights of the master. There 's no getting away from that, in my opinion. Now, any *master* might have done all that, and nobody could have done anything about it. They *do* do it, for that matter, if they 're bad enough, and nobody thinks of touching them."

"Well, I say," said Jones, "Russel, don't you think that 's too bad?"

"Laws, yes, man ; but the world is full of things that are too bad. It 's a bad kind of a place," said Russel, as he lit another cigar.

"Well, how do you think Clayton is going to succeed," said Jones, "if the law is so clearly against him?"

"O, bless you, you don't know Clayton. He is a glorious mystifier. In the first place, he mystifies himself. And, now, you mark me. When a powerful fellow mystifies *himself*, so that he really gets himself thoroughly on to his own side, there 's nobody he *can't* mystify. I speak it in sober sadness, Jones, that the want of this faculty is a great hindrance to me in a certain class of cases. You see I can put on the pathetic and heroic, after a sort ; but I don't take myself along with me — I don't really believe myself. There 's the trouble. It 's this power of self-mystification that makes what you call earnest men. If men saw the real bread and butter and green cheese of life, as

I see it, — the hard, dry, primitive facts, — they could n't raise such commotions as they do."

"Russel, it always makes me uncomfortable to hear you talk. It seems as if you did n't believe in anything!"

"O, yes, I do," said Russel; "I believe in the multiplication table, and several other things of that nature at the beginning of the arithmetic; and, also, that the wicked will do wickedly. But, as to Clayton's splendid abstractions, I only wish him joy of them. But, then, I shall believe him while I hear him talk; so will you; so will all the rest of us. That's the fun of it. But the thing will be just where it was before, and I shall find it so when I wake up to-morrow morning. It's a pity such fellows as Clayton could n't be used as we use big guns. He is death on anything he fires at; and if he only would let me load and point him, he and I together would make a firm that would sweep the land. But here he comes, upon my word."

"Hallo, Clayton, all ready."

"Yes," said Clayton, "I believe so. When will the case be called?"

"To-day, I'm pretty sure," said Russel.

Clayton was destined to have something of an audience in his first plea; for, the Gordons being an influential and a largely-connected family, there was quite an interest excited among them in the affair. Clayton also had many warm personal friends, and his father, mother, and sister, were to be present; for, though residing in a different part of the state, they were at this time on a visit in the vicinity of the town of E.

There is something in the first essay of a young man, in any profession, like the first launching of a ship, which has a never-ceasing hold on human sympathies. Clayton's father, mother, and sister, with Nina, at the time of the dialogue we have given, were sitting together in the parlor of a friend's house in E., discussing the same event.

"I am sure that he will get the case," said Anne Clayton, with the confidence of a generous woman and warm-

hearted sister. "He has been showing me the course of his argument, and it is perfectly irresistible. Has he said anything to you about it, father?"

Judge Clayton had been walking up and down the room, with his hands behind him, with his usual air of considerate gravity. Stopping short at Anne's question, he said,

"Edward's mind and mine work so differently, that I have not thought best to embarrass him by any conference on the subject. I consider the case an unfortunate one, and would rather he could have had some other."

"Why," said Anne, eagerly, "don't you think he'll gain it?"

"Not if the case goes according to law," said Judge Clayton. "But, then, Edward has a great deal of power of eloquence, and a good deal of skill in making a diversion from the main point; so that perhaps he may get the case."

"Why," said Nina, "I thought cases were always decided according to law! What else do they make laws for?"

"You are very innocent, my child," said Judge Clayton.

"But, father, the proof of the outrage is most abundant. Nobody could pretend to justify it."

"Nobody will, child. But that's nothing to the case. The simple point is, *did* the man exceed his legal power? It's my impression he did not."

"Father, what a horrible doctrine!" said Anne

"I simply speak of what is," said Judge Clayton. "I don't pretend to justify it. But Edward has great power of exciting the feelings, and under the influence of his eloquence the case may go the other way, and humanity triumph at the expense of law."

Clayton's plea came on in the afternoon, and justified the expectations of his friends. His personal presence was good, his voice melodious, and his elocution fine. But what impressed his auditors, perhaps, more than these, was a certain elevation and clearness in the moral atmosphere around him, — a gravity and earnestness of conviction,

which gave a secret power to all he said. He took up the doctrine of the dependent relations of life, and of those rules by which they should be guided and restrained; and showed that while absolute power seems to be a necessary condition of many relations of life, both reason and common sense dictate certain limits to it. The law guarantees to the parent, the guardian, and the master, the right of enforcing obedience by chastisement; and the reason for it is, that the subject being supposed to be imperfectly developed, his good will, on the whole, be better consulted by allowing to his lawful guardian this power."

"*The good of the subject*," he said, "is understood to be the foundation of the right; but, when chastisement is inflicted without just cause, and in a manner so inconsiderate and brutal as to endanger the safety and well-being of the subject, the great foundation principle of the law is violated. The act becomes perfectly lawless, and as incapable of legal defence as it is abhorrent to every sentiment of humanity and justice."

"He should endeavor to show," he said, "by full testimony, that the case in question was one of this sort."

In examining witnesses Clayton showed great dignity and acuteness, and as the feeling of the court was already prepossessed in his favor, the cause evidently gathered strength as it went on. The testimony showed, in the most conclusive manner, the general excellence of Milly's character, and the utter brutality of the outrage which had been committed upon her. In his concluding remarks, Clayton addressed the jury in a tone of great elevation and solemnity, on the duty of those to whom is intrusted the guardianship of the helpless.

"No obligation," he said, "can be stronger to an honorable mind, than the obligation of *entire dependence*. The fact that a human being has no refuge from our power, no appeal from our decisions, so far from leading to careless security, is one of the strongest possible motives to caution, and to most exact care. The African race," he said, "had

been bitter sufferers. Their history had been one of wrong and cruelty, painful to every honorable mind. We of the present day, who sustain the relation of slaveholder," he said, "receive from the hands of our fathers an awful trust. Irresponsible power is the greatest trial of humanity, and if we do not strictly guard our own moral purity in the use of it, we shall degenerate into despots and tyrants. No consideration can justify us in holding this people in slavery an hour, unless we make this slavery a guardian relation, in which our superior strength and intelligence is made the protector and educator of their simplicity and weakness."

"The eyes of the world are fastened upon us," he said. "Our continuing in this position at all is, in many quarters, matter of severe animadversion. Let us therefore show, by the spirit in which we administer our laws, by the impartiality with which we protect their rights, that the master of the helpless African is his best and truest friend."

It was evident, as Clayton spoke, that he carried the whole of his audience with him. The counsel on the other side felt himself much straitened. There is very little possibility of eloquence in defending a manifest act of tyranny and cruelty; and a man speaks, also, at great disadvantage, who not only is faint-hearted in his own cause, but feels the force of the whole surrounding atmosphere against him.

In fact, the result was, that the judge charged the jury, if they found the chastisement to have been disproportionate and cruel, to give verdict for the plaintiff. The jury, with little discussion, gave it unanimously accordingly, and so Clayton's first cause was won.

If ever a woman feels proud of her lover, it is when she sees him as a successful public speaker; and Nina, when the case was over, stood half-laughing, half-blushing, in a circle of ladies, who alternately congratulated and rallied her on Clayton's triumph.

"Ah," said Frank Russel, "we understand the magic!

The knight always fights well when his lady-love looks down! Miss Gordon must have the credit of this. She took all the strength out of the other side, — like the mountain of loadstone, that used to draw all the nails out of the ship."

"I am glad," said Judge Clayton, as he walked home with his wife, "I am very glad that Edward has met with such success. His nature is so fastidious that I have had my fears that he would not adhere to the law. There are many things in it, I grant, which would naturally offend a fastidious mind, and one which, like his, is always idealizing life."

"He has established a noble principle," said Mrs. Clayton.

"I wish he had," said the judge. "It would be a very ungrateful task, but I could have shattered his argument all to pieces."

"Don't tell him so!" said Mrs. Clayton, apprehensively; "let him have the comfort of it."

"Certainly I shall. Edward is a good fellow, and I hope, after a while, he'll draw well in the harness."

Meanwhile, Frank Russel and Will Jones were walking along in another direction.

"Did n't I tell you so?" said Russel. "You see, Clayton run Bedford down, horse and foot, and made us all as solemn as a preparatory lecture."

"But he had a good argument," said Jones.

"To be sure he had — I never knew him to want that. He builds up splendid arguments, always, and the only thing to be said of him, after it's all over, is, it is n't so; it's no such thing. Barker is terribly wroth, I can assure you. He swears he'll appeal the case. But that's no matter. Clayton has had his day all the same. He is evidently waked up. O, he has no more objection to a little popularity than you and I have, now; and if we could humor him along, as we would a trout, we should have him a first-rate lawyer, one of these days. Did you see Miss Gor-

don while he was pleading? By George! she looked so handsome, I was sorry I had n't taken her myself!"

"Is she that dashing little flirting Miss Gordon that I heard of in New York?"

"The very same."

"How came she to take a fancy to him?"

"She? How do I know? She's as full of streaks as a tulip; and her liking for him is one of them. Did you notice her, Will? — scarf flying one way, and little curls, and pennants, and streamers, and veil, the other! And, then, those eyes! She's alive, every inch of her! She puts me in mind of a sweet-brier bush, winking and blinking, full of dew-drops, full of roses, and brisk little thorns, beside! Ah, she'll keep him awake!"

CHAPTER V.

MAGNOLIA GROVE.

JUDGE Clayton was not mistaken in supposing that his son would contemplate the issue of the case he had defended with satisfaction. As we have already intimated, Clayton was somewhat averse to the practice of the law. Regard for the feelings of his father had led him to resolve that he would at least give it a fair trial. His own turn of mind would have led him to some work of more immediate and practical philanthropy. He would much preferred to have retired to his own estate, and devoted himself, with his sister, to the education of his servants. But he felt that he could not, with due regard to his father's feelings, do this until he had given professional life a fair trial.

After the scene of the trial which we have described, he returned to his business, and Anne solicited Nina to accompany her for a few weeks to their plantation at Magnolia Grove, whither, as in duty bound, we may follow her.

Our readers will therefore be pleased to find themselves transported to the shady side of a veranda belonging to Clayton's establishment at Magnolia Grove.

The place derived its name from a group of these beautiful trees, in the centre of which the house was situated. It was a long, low cottage, surrounded by deep verandas, festooned with an exuberance of those climbing plants which are so splendid in the southern latitude.

The range of apartments which opened on the veranda where Anne and Nina were sitting were darkened to exclude the flies ; but the doors, standing open, gave picture-

like gleams of the interior. The white, matted floors, light bamboo furniture, couches covered with glazed white linen, and the large vases of roses disposed here and there, where the light would fall upon them, presented a back-ground of inviting coolness.

It was early in the morning, and the two ladies were enjoying the luxury of a tête-à-tête breakfast before the sun had yet dried the heavy dews which give such freshness to the morning air. A small table which stood between them was spread with choice fruits, arranged on dishes in green leaves; a pitcher of iced milk, and a delicate little tête-à-tête coffee-service, dispensing the perfume of the most fragrant coffee. Nor were they wanting those small, delicate biscuits, and some of those curious forms of corn-bread, of the manufacture of which every southern cook is so justly proud. Nor should we omit the central vase of monthly roses, of every shade of color, the daily arrangement of which was the special delight of Anne's brown little waiting-maid, Lettice.

Anne Clayton, in a fresh white morning-wrapper, with her pure, healthy complexion, fine teeth, and frank, beaming smile, looked like a queenly damask rose. A queen she really was on her own plantation, reigning by the strongest of all powers, that of love.

The African race have large ideality and veneration; and in no drawing-room could Anne's beauty and grace, her fine manners and carriage, secure a more appreciating and unlimited admiration and devotion. The negro race, with many of the faults of children, unite many of their most amiable qualities, in the simplicity and confidingness with which they yield themselves up in admiration of a superior friend.

Nina had been there but a day, yet could not fail to read in the eyes of all how absolute was the reign which Anne held over their affections.

"How delightful the smell of this magnolia blossom!"

said Nina. "O, I'm glad that you waked me so early, Anne!"

"Yes," said Anne, "in this climate early rising becomes a necessary of life to those who mean to have any real, positive pleasure in it; and I'm one of the sort that must have *positive* pleasures. Merely negative rest, lassitude, and dreaming, are not enough for me. I want to feel that I'm alive, and that I accomplish something."

"Yes, I see," said Nina, "you are not nominally like me, but really housekeeper. What wonderful skill you seem to have! Is it possible that you keep nothing locked up here?"

"No," said Anne, "nothing. I am released from the power of the keys, thank fortune! When I first came here, everybody told me it was sheer madness to try such a thing. But I told them that I was determined to do it, and Edward upheld me in it; and you can see how well I've succeeded."

"Indeed," said Nina, "you must have magic power, for I never saw a household move on so harmoniously. All your servants seem to think, and contrive, and take an interest in what they are doing. How did you begin? What did you do?"

"Well," said Anne, "I'll tell you the history of the plantation. In the first place, it belonged to mamma's uncle; and, not to spoil a story for relation's sake, I must say he was a dissipated, unprincipled man. He lived a perfectly heathen life here, in the most shocking way you can imagine; and so the poor creatures who were under him were worse heathen than he. He lived with a quadroon woman, who was violent tempered, and when angry ferociously cruel; and so the servants were constantly passing from the extreme of indulgence to the extreme of cruelty. You can scarce have an idea of the state we found them in. My heart almost failed me; but Edward said, 'Don't give it up, Anne; try the good that is in them.' Well, I confess, it seemed very much as it seemed to me

when I was once at a water-cure establishment, — patients would be brought in languid, pale, cold, half dead, and it appeared as if it would kill them to apply cold water; but, somehow or other, there was a vital power in them that reacted under it. Well, just so it was with my servants. I called them all together, and I said to them, ‘Now, people have always said that you are the greatest thieves in the world; that there is no managing you except by locking up everything from you. But, I think differently. I have an idea that you can be trusted. I have been telling people that they don’t know how much good there is in you; and now, just to show them what you can do, I’m going to begin and leave the closets and doors, and everything, unlocked, and I shall not watch you. You can take my things, if you choose; and if, after a time, I find that you can’t be trusted, I shall go back to the old way.’ Well, my dear, I wouldn’t have believed myself that the thing would have answered so well. In the first place, approbateness is a stronger principle with the African race than almost any other; they like to be thought well of. Immediately there was the greatest spirit in the house, for the poor creatures, having suddenly made the discovery that somebody thought they were to be trusted, were very anxious to keep up the reputation. The elder ones watched the younger; and, in fact, my dear, I had very little trouble. The children at first troubled me going into my store-closet and getting the cake, notwithstanding very spirited government on the part of the mammies. So, I called my family in session again, and said that their conduct had confirmed my good opinion; that I always knew they could be trusted, and that my friends were astonished to hear how well they did; but that I had observed that some of the children probably had taken my cake. ‘Now, you know,’ said I, ‘that I have no objection to your having some. If any of you would enjoy a piece of cake, I shall be happy to give it to them, but it is not agreeable to have things in my closet fingered over — I shall therefore set

a plate of cake out every day, and anybody that wishes to take some I hope will take that.' Well, my dear, my plate of cake stood there and dried. You won't believe me, but in fact it was n't touched."

"Well," said Nina, "I should n't think you could have had our Tomtit here! Why, really, this goes beyond the virtue of white children."

"My dear, it is n't such a luxury to white children to be thought well of, and have a character. You must take that into account. It was a taste of a new kind of pleasure, made attractive by its novelty."

"Yes," said Nina, "I have something in me which makes me feel this would be the right way. I know it would be with me. There's nothing like confidence. If a person trusts me, I'm bound."

"Yet," said Anne, "I can't get the ladies of my acquaintance to believe in it. They see how I get along, but they insist upon it that it's some secret magic, or art, of mine."

"Well, it is so," said Nina. "Such things are just like the divining-rod; they won't work in every hand; it takes a real, generous, warm-hearted woman, like you, Anne. But, could you carry your system through your plantation, as well as your house?"

"The field-hands were more difficult to manage, on some accounts," said Anne, "but the same principle prevailed with them. Edward tried all he could to awaken self-respect. Now, I counselled that we should endeavor to form some decent habits before we built the cabins over. I told him they could not appreciate cleanliness and order. 'Very likely they cannot,' he said, 'but we are not to suppose it;' and he gave orders immediately for that pretty row of cottages you saw down at the quarters. He put up a large bathing establishment. Yet he did not enforce at first personal cleanliness by strict rules. Those who began to improve first were encouraged and noticed; and, as they found this a passport to favor, the thing took rapidly. It required a great while to teach them how to be consistently orderly

and cleanly even after the first desire had been awakened, because it is n't every one that likes neatness and order, who has the forethought and skill to secure it. But there has been a steady progress in these respects. One curious peculiarity of Edward's management gives rise to a good many droll scenes. He has instituted a sort of jury trial among them. There are certain rules for the order and well-being of the plantation, which all agree to abide by; and, in all offences, the man is tried by a jury of his peers. Mr. Smith, our agent, says that these scenes are sometimes very diverting, but on the whole there's a good deal of shrewdness and sense manifested; but he says that, in general, they incline much more to severity than he would. You see the poor creatures have been so barbarized by the way they have been treated in past times, that it has made them hard and harsh. I assure you, Nina, I never appreciated the wisdom of God, in the laws which he made for the Jews in the wilderness, as I have since I've tried the experiment myself of trying to bring a set of slaves out of barbarism. Now, this that I'm telling you is the fairest side of the story. I can't begin to tell you the thousand difficulties and trials which we have encountered in it. Sometimes I've been almost worn out and discouraged. But, then, I think, if there is a missionary work in this world, it is this."

"And what do your neighbors think about it?" said Nina.

"Well," said Anne, "they are all very polite, well-bred people, the families with whom we associate; and such people, of course, would never think of interfering, or expressing a difference of opinion, in any very open way; but I have the impression that they regard it with suspicion. They sometimes let fall words which make me think they do. It's a way of proceeding which very few would adopt, because it is not a money-making operation, by any means. The plantation barely pays for itself, because Edward makes that quite a secondary consideration. The thing which ex-

cites the most murmuring is our teaching them to read. I teach the children myself two hours every day, because I think this would be less likely to be an offence than if I should hire a teacher. Mr. Smith teaches any of the grown men who are willing to take the trouble to learn. Any man who performs a certain amount of labor can secure to himself two or three hours a day to spend as he chooses; and many do choose to learn. Some of the men and the women have become quite good readers, and Clayton is constantly sending books for them. This, I'm afraid, gives great offence. It is against the law to do it; but, as unjust laws are sometimes lived down, we thought we would test the practicability of doing this. There was some complaint made of our servants, because they have not the servile, subdued air which commonly marks the slave, but look, speak, and act, as if they respected themselves. I'm sometimes afraid that we shall have trouble; but, then, I hope for the best."

"What does Mr. Clayton expect to be the end of all this?" said Nina.

"Why," said Anne, "I think Edward has an idea that one of these days they may be emancipated on the soil, just as the serfs were in England. It looks to me rather hopeless, I must say; but he says the best way is for some one to begin and set an example of what ought to be done, and he hopes that in time it will be generally followed. It would, if all men were like him; but there lies my doubt. The number of those who would pursue such a disinterested course is very small. But who comes there? Upon my word, if there is n't my particular admirer, Mr. Bradshaw!"

As Anne said this, a very gentlemanly middle-aged man came up on horseback, on the carriage-drive which passed in front of the veranda. He bore in his hand a large bunch of different-colored roses; and, alighting, and delivering his horse to his servant, came up the steps, and presented it to Anne.

"There," said he, "are the first fruits of my roses, in the garden that I started in Rosedale."

"Beautiful," said Anne, taking them. "Allow me to present to you Miss Gordon."

"Miss Gordon, your most obedient," said Mr. Bradshaw, bowing obsequiously.

"You are just in season, Mr. Bradshaw," said Anne, "for I'm sure you could n't have had your breakfast before you started; so sit down and help us with ours."

"Thank you, Miss Anne," said Mr. Bradshaw, "the offer is too tempting to be refused." And he soon established himself as a third at the little table, and made himself very sociable.

"Well, Miss Anne, how do all your plans proceed — all your benevolences and cares? I hope your angel ministrations don't exhaust you."

"Not at all, Mr. Bradshaw; do I look like it?"

"No, indeed! but such energy is perfectly astonishing to us all."

Nina's practised eye observed that Mr. Bradshaw had that particular nervous, restless air, which belongs to a man who is charged with a particular message, and finds himself unexpectedly blockaded by the presence of a third person. So, after breakfast, exclaiming that she had left her crochet-needle in her apartment, and resisting Anne's offer to send a servant for it, by declaring that nobody could find it but herself, she left the veranda. Mr. Bradshaw had been an old family friend for many years, and stood with Anne almost on the easy footing of a relation, which gave him the liberty of speaking with freedom. The moment the door of the parlor was closed after Nina, he drew a chair near to Anne, and sat down, with the unmistakable air of a man who is going into a confidential communication.

"The fact is, my dear Miss Clayton," he said, "I have something on my mind that I want to tell you; and I hope you will think my long friendship for the family a sufficient warrant for my speaking on matters which really belong

chiefly to yourself. The fact is, my dear Miss Clayton, I was at a small dinner-party of gentlemen, the other day, at Colonel Grandon's. There was a little select set there, you know,—the Howards, and the Elliotts, and the Howlands, and so on,—and the conversation happened to turn upon your brother. Now, there was the very greatest respect for him; they seemed to have the highest possible regard for his motives; but still they felt that he was going on a very dangerous course."

"Dangerous?" said Anne, a little startled.

"Yes, really dangerous; and I think so myself, though I, perhaps, don't feel as strongly as some do."

"Really," said Anne, "I'm quite at a loss!"

"My dear Miss Anne, it's these improvements, you know, which you are making.—Don't misapprehend me! Admirable, very admirable, in themselves,—done from the most charming of motives, Miss Anne,—but dangerous, dangerous!"

The solemn, mysterious manner in which these last words were pronounced made Anne laugh; but when she saw the expression of real concern on the face of her good friend, she checked herself, and said,

"Pray, explain yourself. I don't understand you."

"Why, Miss Anne, it's just here. We appreciate your humanity, and your self-denial, and your indulgence to your servants. Everybody is of opinion that it's admirable. You are really quite a model for us all. But, when it comes to teaching them to read and write, Miss Anne," he said, lowering his voice, "I think you don't consider what a dangerous weapon you are putting into their hands. The knowledge will spread on to the other plantations; bright niggers will pick it up; for the very fellows who are most dangerous are the very ones who will be sure to learn."

"What if they should?" said Anne.

"Why, my dear Miss Anne," said he, lowering his voice, "the facilities that it will afford them for combinations, for insurrections! You see, Miss Anne, I read a story once of

a man who made a cork leg with such wonderful accuracy that it would walk of itself, and when he got it on he could n't stop its walking—it walked him to death—actually did! Walked him up hill and down dale, till the poor man fell down exhausted; and then it ran off with his body. And it's running with its skeleton to this day, I believe."

And good-natured Mr. Bradshaw conceived such a ridiculous idea, at this stage of his narrative, that he leaned back in his chair and laughed heartily, wiping his perspiring face with a cambric pocket-handkerchief.

"Really, Mr. Bradshaw, it's a very amusing idea, but I don't see the analogy," said Anne.

"Why, don't you see? You begin teaching niggers, and having reading and writing, and all these things, going on, and they begin to open their eyes, and look round and think; and they are having opinions of their own, they won't take yours; and they want to rise directly. And if they can't rise, why, they are all discontented; and there's the what's-his-name to pay with them! Then come conspiracies and insurrections, no matter how well you treat them; and, now, we South Carolinians have had experience in this matter. You must excuse us, but it is a terrible subject with us. Why, the leaders of that conspiracy, all of them, were fellows who could read and write, and who had nothing in the world to wish for, in the way of comfort, treated with every consideration by their masters. It is a most melancholy chapter in human nature. It shows that there is no trust to be placed in them. And, now, the best way to get along with negroes, in my opinion, is to make them happy; give them plenty to eat and drink and wear, and keep them amused and excited, and don't work them too hard. I think it's a great deal better than this kind of exciting instruction. Mind," he said, seeing that Anne was going to interrupt him, "mind, now, I'd have religious instruction, of course. Now, this system of oral instruction, teaching them hymns and passages of scripture suited to their peculiar condition, it's just the

thing; it is n't so liable to these dangers. I hope you'll excuse me, Miss Anne, but the gentlemen really feel very serious about these things; they find it's affecting their own negroes. You know, somehow, everything goes round from one plantation to another; and one of them said that he had a very smart man who is married to one of your women, and he actually found him with a spelling-book, sitting out under a tree. He said if the man had had a rifle he could n't have been more alarmed; because the man was just one of those sharp, resolute fellows, that, if he knew how to read and write, there's no knowing what he would do. Well, now, you see how it is. He takes the spelling-book away, and he tells him he will give him nine-and-thirty if he ever finds him with it again. What's the consequence? Why, the consequence is, the man sulks and gets ugly, and he has to sell him. That's the way it's operating."

"Well, then," said Anne, looking somewhat puzzled, "I will strictly forbid our people to allow spelling-books to go out of their hands, or to communicate any of these things off of the plantation."

"O, I tell you, Miss Anne, you can't do it. You don't know the passion in human nature for anything that is forbidden. Now, I believe it's more that than love of reading. You can't shut up such an experiment as you are making here. It's just like a fire. It will blaze; it will catch on all the plantations round; and I assure you it's matter of life and death with us. You smile, Miss Anne, but it's so."

"Really, my dear Mr. Bradshaw, you could not have addressed me on a more unpleasant subject. I am sorry to excite the apprehension of our neighbors; but —"

"Give me leave to remind you, also, Miss Anne, that the teaching of slaves to read and write is an offence to which a severe penalty is attached by the laws."

"I thought," said Anne, "that such barbarous laws were a dead letter in a Christian community, and that the best

tribute I could pay to its Christianity was practically to disregard them."

"By no means, Miss Anne, by no means! Why, look at us here in South Carolina. The negroes are three to one over the whites now. Will it do to give them the further advantages of education and facilities of communication? You see, at once, it will not. Now, well-bred people, of course, are extremely averse to mingling in the affairs of other families; and had you merely taught a few favorites, in a private way, as I believe people now and then do, it would n't have seemed so bad; but to have regular provision for teaching school, and school-hours, — I think, Miss Anne, you'll find it will result in unpleasant consequences."

"Yes, I fancy," said Anne, raising herself up, and slightly coloring, "that I see myself in the penitentiary for the sin and crime of teaching children to read! I think, Mr. Bradshaw, it is time such laws were disregarded. Is not that the only way in which many laws are repealed? Society outgrows them, people disregard them, and so they fall away, like the calyx from some of my flowers. Come, now, Mr. Bradshaw, come with me to my school. I'm going to call it together," said Anne, rising, and beginning to go down the veranda steps. "Certainly, my dear friend, you ought not to judge without seeing. Wait a moment, till I call Miss Gordon."

And Anne stepped across the shady parlor, and in a few moments reappeared with Nina, both arrayed in white cape-bonnets. They crossed to the right of the house, to a small cluster of neat cottages, each one of which had its little vegetable garden, and its plot in front carefully tended with flowers. They passed onward into a grove of magnolias which skirted the back of the house, till they came to a little building, with the external appearance of a small Grecian temple, the pillars of which were festooned with jessamine.

"Pray, what pretty little place is this?" said Mr. Bradshaw.

"This is my school-room," said Anne.

Mr. Bradshaw repressed a whistle of astonishment; but the emotion was plainly legible in his face, and Anne said, laughing,

"A lady's school-room, you know, should be lady-like. Besides, I wish to inspire ideas of taste, refinement, and self-respect, in these children. I wish learning to be associated with the idea of elegance and beauty."

They ascended the steps, and entered a large room, surrounded on three sides by black-boards. The floor was covered with white matting, and the walls hung with very pretty pictures of French lithographs, tastefully colored. In some places cards were hung up, bearing quotations of scripture. There were rows of neat desks, before each of which there was a little chair.

Anne stepped to the door and rang a bell, and in about ten minutes the patter of innumerable little feet was heard ascending the steps, and presently they came streaming in — all ages, from four or five to fifteen, and from the ebony complexion of the negro, with its closely-curling wool, to the rich brown cheek of the quadroon, with melancholy lustrous eyes, and waving hair. All were dressed alike, in a neat uniform of some kind of blue stuff, with white capes and aprons.

They filed in to the tune of one of those marked rhythmical melodies which characterize the negro music, and, moving in exact time to the singing, assumed their seats, which were arranged with regard to their age and size. As soon as they were seated, Anne, after a moment's pause, clapped her hands, and the whole school commenced a morning hymn, in four parts, which was sung so beautifully that Mr. Bradshaw, quite overpowered, stood with tears in his eyes. Anne nodded at Nina, and cast on him a satisfied glance.

After that, there was a rapid review of the classes. There was reading, spelling, writing on the black-board, and the smaller ones were formed in groups in two adjoin-

ing apartments, under the care of some of the older girls. Anne walked about superintending the whole; and Nina, who saw the scene for the first time, could not repress her exclamation of delight. The scholars were evidently animated by the presence of company, and anxious to do credit to the school and teacher, and the two hours passed rapidly away. Anne exhibited to Mr. Bradshaw specimens of the proficiency of her scholars in hand-writing, and the drawing of maps, and even the copying of small lithograph cards, which contained a series of simple drawing-patterns. Mr. Bradshaw seemed filled with astonishment.

"'Pon my word," said he, "these are surprising! Miss Anne, you are a veritable magician — a worker of miracles! You must have found Aaron's rod, again! My dear madam, you run the risk of being burned for a witch!"

"Very few, Mr. Bradshaw, know how much of beauty lies sealed up in this neglected race," said Anne, with enthusiasm.

As they were walking back to the house, Mr. Bradshaw fell a little behind, and his face wore a thoughtful and almost sad expression.

"Well," said Anne, looking round, "a penny for your thoughts!"

"O, I see, Miss Anne, you are for pursuing your advantage. I see triumph in your eyes. But yet," he added, "after all this display, the capability of your children makes me feel sad. To what end is it? What purpose will it serve, except to unfit them for their inevitable condition — to make them discontented and unhappy?"

"Well," replied Anne, "there ought to be no inevitable condition that makes it necessary to dwarf a human mind. Any condition which makes a full development of the powers that God has given us a misfortune, cannot, certainly, be a healthy one — cannot be right. If a mind will grow and rise, make way and let it. Make room for it, and cut down everything that stands in the way!"

"That's terribly levelling doctrine, Miss Anne."

"Let it level, then!" said Anne. "I don't care! I come from the old Virginia cavalier blood, and am not afraid of anything."

"But, Miss Anne, how do you account for it that the best-educated and best-treated slaves — in fact, as you say, the most perfectly-developed human beings — were those who got up the insurrection in Charleston?"

"How do you account for it," said Anne, "that the best-developed and finest specimens of men have been those that have got up insurrections in Italy, Austria, and Hungary?"

"Well, you admit, then," said Mr. Bradshaw, "that if you say A in this matter, you've got to say B."

"Certainly," said Anne, "and when the time comes to say B, I'm ready to say it. I admit, Mr. Bradshaw, it's a very dangerous thing to get up steam, if you don't intend to let the boat go. But when the steam is high enough, let her go, say I."

"Yes, but, Miss Anne, other people don't want to say so. The fact is, we are not all of us ready to let the boat go. It's got all our property in it — all we have to live on. If you are willing yourself, so far as your people are concerned, they'll inevitably want liberty, and you say you'll be ready to give it to them; but your fires will raise a steam on our plantations, and we must shut down these escape-valves. Don't you see? Now, for my part, I've been perfectly charmed with this school of yours; but, after all, I can't help inquiring whereto it will grow."

"Well, Mr. Bradshaw," said Anne, "I'm obliged to you for the frankness of this conversation. It's very friendly and sincere. I think, however, I shall continue to compliment the good sense and gallantry of this state, by ignoring its unworthy and unchristian laws. I will endeavor, nevertheless, to be more careful and guarded as to the manner of what I do; but, if I should be put into the penitentiary, Mr. Bradshaw, I hope you'll call on me."

"Miss Anne, I beg ten thousand pardons for that unfortunate allusion."

"I think," said Anne, "I shall impose it as a penance upon you to stay and spend the day with us, and then I'll show you my rose-garden. I have great counsel to hold with you on the training of a certain pillar-rose. You see, my design is to get you involved in my treason. You've already come into complicity with it, by visiting my school."

"Thank you, Miss Anne, I should be only too much honored to be your abettor in any treason you might meditate. But, really, I'm a most unlucky dog! Think of my having four bachelor friends engaged to dine with me, and so being obliged to decline your tempting offer! In fact, I must take horse before the sun gets any hotter."

"There he goes, for a good-hearted creature as he is!" said Anne.

"Do you know," said Nina, laughing, "that I thought that he was some poor, desperate mortal, who was on the verge of a proposal, this morning, and I ran away like a good girl, to give him a fair field?"

"Child," said Anne, "you are altogether too late in the day. Mr. Bradshaw and I walked that little figure some time ago, and now he is one of the most convenient and agreeable of friends."

"Anne, why in the world don't you get in love with somebody?" said Nina.

"My dear, I think there was something or other left out when I was made up," said Anne, laughing, "but I never had much of a fancy for the lords of creation. They do tolerably well till they come to be lovers; but then they are perfectly unbearable. Lions in love, my dear, don't appear to advantage, you know. I can't marry papa or Edward, and they have spoiled me for everybody else. Besides, I'm happy, and what do I want of any of them? Can't there be now and then a woman sufficient to herself? But, Nina, dear, I'm sorry that our affairs here are giving offence and making uneasiness."

"For my part," said Nina, "I should go right on. I have noticed that people try all they can to stop a person who is taking an unusual course; and when they are perfectly certain that they can't stop them, then they turn round and fall in with them; and I think that will be the case with you."

"They certainly will have an opportunity of trying," said Anne. "But there is Dulcimer coming up the avenue with the letter-bag. Now, child, I don't believe you appreciate half my excellence, when you consider that I used to have all these letters that fall to you every mail."

At this moment Dulcimer rode up to the veranda steps, and deposited the letter-bag in Anne's hands.

"What an odd name you have given him!" said Nina, "and what a comical-looking fellow he is! He has a sort of waggish air that reminds me of a crow."

"O, Dulcimer don't belong to our régime," said Anne. "He was the prime minister and favorite under the former reign, — a sort of licensed court jester, — and to this day he hardly knows how to do anything but sing and dance; and so brother, who is for allowing the largest liberty to everybody, imposes on him only such general and light tasks as suit his roving nature. But there!" she said, throwing a letter on Nina's lap, and at the same time breaking the seal of one directed to herself. "Ah, I thought so! You see, puss, Edward has some law business that takes him to this part of the state forthwith. Was ever such convenient law business? We may look for him to-night. Now there will be rejoicings! How now, Dulcimer? I thought you had gone," she said, looking up, and observing that personage still lingering in the shade of a tulip-tree near the veranda.

"Please, Miss Anne, is Master Clayton coming home to-night?"

"Yes, Dulcimer; so now go and spread the news; for that's what you want, I know."

And Dulcimer, needing no second suggestion, was out of sight in the shrubbery in a few moments.

"Now, I'll wager," said Anne, "that creature will get up something or other extraordinary for this evening."

"Such as what?" said Nina.

"Well, he is something of a troubadour, and I should n't wonder if he should be cudgelling his brain at this moment for a song. We shall have some kind of operatic performance, you may be sure."

CHAPTER VI.

THE TROUBADOUR.

ABOUT five o'clock in the evening, Nina and Anne amused themselves with setting a fancy tea-table on the veranda. Nina had gathered a quantity of the leaves of the live oak, which she possessed a particular faculty of plaiting in long, flat wreaths, and with these she garlanded the social round table, after it had been draped in its snowy damask, while Anne was busy arranging fruit in dishes with vine-leaves.

"Lettice will be in despair, to-night," said Anne, looking up, and smiling at a neatly-dressed brown mulatto girl, who stood looking on with large, lustrous eyes; "her occupation's gone!"

"O, Lettice must allow me to show my accomplishments," said Nina. "There are some household arts that I have quite a talent for. If I had lived in what's-its-name, there, that they used to tell about in old times — Arcadia — I should have made a good housekeeper; for nothing suits me better than making wreaths, and arranging bouquets. My nature is dressy. I want to dress everything. I want to dress tables, and dress vases, and adorn dishes, and dress handsome women, Anne! So look out for yourself, for when I have done crowning the table, I shall crown you!"

As Nina talked, she was flitting hither and thither, taking up and laying down flowers and leaves, shaking out long sprays, and fluttering from place to place, like a bird.

"It's a pity," said Anne, "that life can't be all Arcadia!"

"O, yes!" said Nina. "When I was a child, I remem-

ber there was an old torn translation of a book called Gesner's Idyls, that used to lie about the house ; and I used to read in it most charming little stories about handsome shepherds, dressed in white, playing on silver and ivory flutes ; and shepherdesses, with azure mantles and floating hair ; and people living on such delightful things as cool curds and milk, and grapes, and strawberries, and peaches ; and there was no labor, and no trouble, and no dirt, and no care. Everybody lived like the flowers and the birds, — growing, and singing, and being beautiful. Ah, dear, I have never got over wanting it since ! Why could n't it be so ? ”

“ It's a thousand pities ! ” said Anne. “ But what constant fight we have to maintain for order and beauty ! ”

“ Yes,” said Nina ; “ and, what seems worse, beauty itself becomes dirt in a day. Now, these roses that we are arranging, to-morrow or next day we shall call them *litter*, and wish somebody would sweep them out of the way. But I never want to be the one to do that. I want some one to carry away the withered flowers, and wash the soiled vases ; but I want to be the one to cut the fresh roses every day. If I were in an association, I should take that for my part. I'd arrange all their flowers through the establishment, but I should stipulate expressly that I should do no clearing up.”

“ Well,” said Anne, “ it's really a mystery to me what a constant downward tendency there is to everything — how everything is gravitating back, as you may say, into disorder. Now, I think a cleanly, sweet, tasteful house — and, above all, table — are among the highest works of art. And yet, how everything attacks you when you set out to attain it — flies, cockroaches, ants, mosquitos ! And, then, it seems to be the fate of all human beings, that they are constantly wearing out and disarranging and destroying all that is about them.”

“ Yes,” said Nina, “ I could n't help thinking of that when we were at the camp-meeting. The first day, I was perfectly charmed. Everything was so fresh, so cool, so

dewy and sweet; but, by the end of the second day, they had thrown egg-shells, and pea-pods, and melon-rinds, and all sorts of abominations, around among the tents, and it was really shocking to contemplate."

"How disgusting!" said Anne.

"Now, I'm one of that sort," said Nina, "that love order dearly, but don't want the trouble of it myself. My prime minister, Aunt Katy, thanks to mamma, is an excellent hand to keep it, and I encourage her in it with all my heart; so that any part of the house where *I* don't go much is in beautiful order. But, bless me, I should have to be made over again before I could do like Aunt Nesbit! Did you ever see her take a pair of gloves or a collar out of a drawer? She gets up, and walks so moderately across the room, takes the key from under the napkin on the right-hand side of the bureau, and unlocks the drawer, as gravely as though she was going to offer a sacrifice. Then, if her gloves are the back side, underneath something else, she takes out one thing after another, so moderately; and then, when the gloves or collar are found, lays everything back exactly where it was before, locks the drawer, and puts the key back under the towel. And all this she'd do if anybody was dying, and she had to go for the doctor! The consequence is, that her room, her drawers, and everything, are a standing sermon to me. But I think I've got to be a much calmer person than I am, before this will come to pass in my case. I'm always in such a breeze and flutter! I fly to my drawer, and scatter things into little whirlwinds; ribbons, scarf, flowers—everything flies out in a perfect rainbow. It seems as if I *should die* if I didn't get the thing I wanted that minute; and, after two or three such attacks on a drawer, then comes repentance, and a long time of rolling up and arranging, and talking to little naughty Nina, who always promises herself to keep better order in future. But, my dear, she does n't do it, I'm sorry to say, as yet, though perhaps there are hopes of her in future. Tell me, Anne,—you are not stiff and 'poky,' and

yet you seem to be endowed with the gift of order. How did it come about?"

"It was not natural to me, I assure you," said Anne. "It was a second nature, drilled into me by mamma."

"Mamma! ah, indeed!" said Nina, giving a sigh. "Then you are very happy! But, come, now, Lettice, I've done with all these; take them away. My tea-table has risen out of them like the world out of chaos," she said, as she swept together a heap of rejected vines, leaves, and flowers. "Ah! I always have a repenting turn, when I've done arranging vases, to think I've picked so many more than were necessary! The poor flowers droop their leaves, and look at me reproachfully, as if they said, 'You did n't want us — why could n't you have left us alone?'"

"O," said Anne, "Lettice will relieve you of that. She has great talents in the floral line, and out of these she will arrange quantities of bouquets," she said, as Lettice, blushing perceptibly through her brown skin, stooped and swept up the rejected flowers into her apron.

"What have we here?" said Anne, as Dulcimer, attired with most unusual care, came bowing up the steps, presenting a note on a waiter. "Dear me, how stylish! gilt-edged paper, smelling of myrrh and ambergris!" she continued, as she broke the seal. "What's this?"

"The Magnolia Grove troubadours request the presence of Mr. and Miss Clayton and Miss Gordon at an operatic performance, which will be given this evening, at eight o'clock, in the grove."

"Very well done! I fancy some of my scholars have been busy with the writing. Dulcimer, we shall be happy to come."

"Where upon earth did he pick up those phrases?" said Nina, when he had departed.

"O," said Anne, "I told you that he was prime favorite of the former proprietor, who used to take him with him

wherever he travelled; as people sometimes will a pet monkey; and, I dare say, he has lounged round the lobbies of many an 'opéra-house. I told you that he was going to get up something."

"What a delightful creature he must be!" said Nina.

"Perhaps so, to you," said Anne; "but he is a troublesome person to manage. He is as wholly destitute of any moral organs as a jackdaw. One sometimes questions whether these creatures have any more than a reflected mimicry of a human soul—such as the German stories imagine in Cobolds and water spirits. All I can see in Dulcimer is a kind of fun-loving animal. He don't seem to have any moral nature."

"Perhaps," said Nina, "his moral nature is something like the cypress-vine seeds which I planted three months ago, and which have just come up."

"Well, I believe Edward expects to see it along, one of these days," said Anne. "His faith in human nature is unbounded. I think it one of his foibles, for my part; but yet I try to have hopes of Dulcimer, that some day or other he will have some glimmering perceptions of the difference between a lie and the truth, and between his own things and other people's. At present, he is the most lawless marauder on the place. He has been so used to having his wit to cover a multitude of sins, that it's difficult for a scolding to make any impression on him. But, hark! is n't that a horse? Somebody is coming up the avenue."

Both listened.

"There are two," said Nina.

Just at this instant Clayton emerged to view, accompanied by another rider, who, on nearer view, turned out to be Frank Russel. At the same instant, the sound of violins and banjos was heard, and, to Anne's surprise, a gayly-dressed procession of servants and children began to file out from the grove, headed by Dulcimer and several of his associates, playing and singing.

"There," said Anne, "did n't I tell you so? There's the beginning of Dulcimer's operations."

The air was one of those inexpressibly odd ones whose sharp, metallic accuracy of rhythm seems to mark the delight which the negro race feel in that particular element of music. The words, as usual, amounted to very little. Nina and Anne could hear,

"O, I see de mas'r a comin' up de track,
His horse's heels do clatter, with a clack, clack, clack!"

The idea conveyed in these lines being still further carried out by the regular clapping of hands at every accented note, while every voice joined in the chorus:

"Sing, boys, sing; de mas'r is come!
Give three cheers for de good man at home!
Ho! he! ho! Hurra! hurra!"

Clayton acknowledged the compliment, as he came up, by bowing from his horse; and the procession arranged itself in a kind of lane, through which he and his companion rode up to the veranda.

"'Pon my word," said Frank Russel, "I was n't prepared for such a demonstration. Quite a presidential reception!"

When Clayton came to the steps and dismounted, a dozen sprang eagerly forward to take his horse, and in the crowding round for a word of recognition the order of the procession was entirely broken. After many kind words, and inquiries in every direction for a few moments, the people quietly retired, leaving their master to his own enjoyments.

"You really have made quite a triumphal entry," said Nina.

"Dulcimer always exhausts himself on all such occasions," said Anne, "so that he is n't capable of any further virtue for two or three weeks."

"Well, take him while he is in flower, then!" said Russel. "But how perfectly cool and inviting you look!"

Really, quite idyllic ! We must certainly have got into a fairy queen's castle ! ”

“ But you must show us somewhere to shake the dust off of our feet,” said Clayton.

“ Yes,” said Anne, “ there's Aunt Praw waiting to show you your room. Go and make yourselves as fascinating as you can.”

In a little while the gentlemen returned, in fresh white linen suits, and the business of the tea-table proceeded with alacrity.

“ Well, now,” said Anne, after tea, looking at her watch, “ I must inform the company that we are all engaged to the opera this evening.”

“ Yes,” said Nina, “ the Magnolia Grove Opera House is to be opened, and the Magnolia Troubadour Troupe to appear for the first time.”

At this moment they were surprised by the appearance, below the veranda, of Dulcimer, with three of his colored associates, all wearing white ribbons in their button-holes, and carrying white wands tied with satin ribbon, and gravely arranging themselves two and two on each side of the steps.

“ Why, Dulcimer, what's this ? ” said Clayton.

Dulcimer bowed with the gravity of a raven, and announced that the committee had come to wait on the gentlemen and ladies to their seats.

“ O,” said Anne, “ we were not prepared for our part of the play ! ”

“ What a pity I did n't bring my opera-hat ! ” said Nina. “ Never mind,” she said, snatching a spray of multiflora rose, “ this will do.” And she gave it one twist round her head, and her toilet was complete.

“ 'Pon my word, that's soon done ! ” said Frank Russel, as he watched the coronet of half-opened buds and roses.

“ Yes,” said Nina. “ Sit down, Anne ; I forgot your crown. There, wait a moment ; let me turn this leaf a lit-

tle, and weave these buds in here — so. Now you are a Baltimore belle, to be sure! Now for the procession.”

The opera-house for the evening, was an open space in the grove behind the house. Lamps had been hung up in the trees, twinkling on the glossy foliage. A sort of booth or arbor was built of flowers and leaves at one end, to which the party were marshalled in great state. Between two magnolia-trees a white curtain was hung up; and the moment the family party made their appearance, a chorus of voices from behind the scenes began an animated song of welcome.

As soon as the party was seated, the curtain rose, and the chorus, consisting of about thirty of the best singers, males and females, came forward, dressed in their best holiday costume, singing, and keeping step as they sung, and bearing in their hands bouquets, which, as they marched round the circle, they threw at the feet of the company. A wreath of orange-blossoms was significantly directed at Nina, and fell right into her lap.

“These people seem to have had their eyes open. Coming events cast their shadows before!” said Russel.

After walking around, the chorus seated themselves at the side of the area, and the space behind was filled up with a dense sea of heads — all the servants and plantation hands.

“I declare,” said Russel, looking round on the crowd of dark faces, “this sable crowd is turning a silver lining with a witness! How neat and pretty that row of children look!” And, as they spoke, a procession of the children of Anne’s school came filing round in the same manner that the other had done, singing their school-songs, and casting flowers before the company. After this, they seated themselves on low seats in front of all the others.

Dulcimer and four of his companions now came into the centre.

“There,” said Anne, “Dulcimer is going to be the centre piece. He is the troubadour.”

Dulcimer, in fact, commenced a kind of recitative, to the

tune "Mas'r's in the cold, cold ground." After singing a few lines, the quartet took up the chorus, and their voices were really magnificent.

"Why," said Nina, "it seems to me they are beginning in a very doleful way."

"O," said Anne, "wait a minute. This is the old mas'r, I fancy. We shall soon hear the tune changed."

And accordingly, Dulcimer, striking into a new tune, began to rehearse the coming in of a new master.

"There," said Anne, "now for a catalogue of Edward's virtues! They must be all got in, rhyme or no rhyme."

Dulcimer kept on rehearsing. Every four lines, the quartet struck in with the chorus, which was then repeated by the whole company, clapping their hands and stamping their feet to the time, with great vivacity.

"Now, Anne, is coming your turn," said Nina, as Dulcimer launched out, in most high-flown strains, on the beauty of Miss Anne.

"Yes," said Clayton, "the catalogue of your virtues will be somewhat extensive."

"I shall escape, at any rate," said Nina.

"Don't you be too sure," said Anne. "Dulcimer has had his eye on you ever since you've been here."

And true enough, after the next stanza, Dulcimer assumed a peculiarly meaning expression.

"There," said Anne, "do see the wretch flirting himself out like a saucy crow! It's coming! Now look out, Nina!"

With a waggish expression from the corner of his downcast eyes, he sung,

"O, mas'r is often absent — do you know where he goes?

He goes to North Carolina, for de North Carolina rose."

"There you are!" said Frank Russel. "Do you see the grin going round? What a lot of ivory! They are coming in this chorus, strong!"

And the whole assembly, with great animation, poured out on the chorus :

“ O, de North Carolina rose !
O, de North Carolina rose !
We wish good luck to mas'r,
With de North Carolina rose ! ”

This chorus was repeated with enthusiasm, clapping of hands, and laughing.

“ I think the North Carolina rose ought to rise ! ” said Russel.

“ O, hush ! ” said Anne ; “ Dulcimer has n't done yet. ”

Assuming an attitude, Dulcimer turned and sang to one of his associates in the quartet,

“ O, I see two stars a rising,
Up in de shady skies ! ”

To which the other responded, with animation :

“ No, boy, you are mistaken ;
’T is de light of her fair eyes ! ”

“ That ’s *thorough*, at any rate ! ” said Russel.

While Dulcimer went on :

“ O, I see two roses blowing,
Togeder on one bed ! ”

And the other responded :

“ No, boy, you are mistaken ;
Dem are her cheeks so red ! ”

“ And they are getting redder ! ” said Anne, tapping Nina with her fan. “ Dulcimer is evidently laying out his strength upon you, Nina ! ”

Dulcimer went on singing :

“ O, I see a grape-vine running,
With its curly rings, up dere ! ”

And the response,

“ No, boy, you are mistaken ;
’T is her rings of curly hair ! ”

And the quartet here struck up :

“ O, she walks on de veranda,
And she laughs out of de door,
And she dances like de sunshine
Across de parlor floor.
Her little feet, dey patter,
Like de rain upon de flowers ;
And her laugh is like sweet waters,
Through all de summer hours ! ”

“ Dulcimer has had help from some of the muses along there ! ” said Clayton, looking at Anne.

“ Hush ! ” said Anne ; “ hear the chorus.”

“ O, de North Carolina rose !
O, de North Carolina rose !
O, plant by our veranda
De North Carolina rose ! ”

This chorus was repeated with three times three, and the whole assembly broke into a general laugh, when the performers bowed and retired, and the white sheet, which was fastened by a pulley to the limb of a tree, was let down again.

“ Come, now, Anne, confess that was n’t all Dulcimer’s work ! ” said Clayton.

“ Well, to tell the truth,” said Anne, “ ’t was got up between him and Lettice, who has a natural turn for versifying, quite extraordinary. If I chose to encourage and push her on, she might turn out a second Phillis Wheatly.”

Dulcimer and his coadjutors now came round, bearing trays with lemonade, cake, sliced pine-apples, and some other fruits.

“ Well, on my word,” said Russel, “ this is quite prettily got up ! ”

“ O, I think,” said Clayton, “ the African race evidently

are made to excel in that department which lies between the sensuous and the intellectual — what we call the elegant arts. These require rich and abundant animal nature, such as they possess ; and, if ever they become highly civilized, they will excel in music, dancing, and elocution."

"I have often noticed," said Anne, "in my scholars, how readily they seize upon anything which pertains to the department of music and language. The negroes are sometimes laughed at for mispronouncing words, which they will do in a very droll manner ; but it's only because they are so taken with the sounds of words that they will try to pronounce beyond the sphere of their understanding, like bright children."

"Some of these voices here are perfectly splendid," said Russel.

"Yes," said Anne, "we have one or two girls on the place who have that rich contralto voice which, I think, is oftener to be found among them than among whites."

"The Ethiopian race is a slow-growing plant, like the aloe," said Clayton ; "but I hope, some of these days, they'll come into flower ; and I think, if they ever do, the blossoming will be gorgeous."

"That will do for a poet's expectation," said Russel.

The performance now gave place to a regular dancing-party, which went on with great animation, yet decorum.

"Religious people," said Clayton, "who have instructed the negroes, I think have wasted a great deal of their energy in persuading them to give up dancing and singing songs. I try to regulate the propensity. There is no use in trying to make the negroes into Anglo-Saxons, any more than making a grape-vine into a pear-tree. I train the grape-vine."

"Behold," said Russel, "the successful champion of negro rights !"

"Not so very successful," said Clayton. "I suppose you've heard my case has been appealed ; so that my victory is n't so certain, after all."

"O," said Nina, "yes, it must be! I'm sure no person of common sense would decide any other way; and your own father is one of the judges, too."

"That will only make him the more careful not to be influenced in my favor," said Clayton.

The dancing now broke up, and the servants dispersed in an orderly manner, and the company returned to the veranda, which lay pleasantly checkered with the light of the moon falling through trailing vines. The air was full of those occasional pulsations of fragrance which rise in the evening from flowers.

"O, how delightful," said Nina, "this fragrance of the honeysuckles! I have a perfect passion for perfumes! They seem to me like spirits in the air."

"Yes," said Clayton, "Lord Bacon says, 'that the breath of flowers comes and goes in the air, like the warbling of music.'"

"Did Lord Bacon say that?" said Nina, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes; why not?" said Clayton.

"O, I thought he was one of those musty old philosophers, who never thought of anything pretty!"

"Well," said Clayton, "then to-morrow let me read you his essay on gardens, and you'll find musty old philosophers often do think of pretty things."

"It was Lord Bacon," said Anne, "who always wanted musicians playing in the next room while he was composing."

"He did?" said Nina. "Why, how delightful of him! I think I should like to hear some of his essays."

"There are some minds," said Clayton, "large enough to take in everything. Such men can talk as prettily of a ring on a lady's finger, as they can wisely on the courses of the planets. Nothing escapes them."

"That's the kind of man *you* ought to have for a lover, Anne," said Nina, laughing; "you have weight enough to risk it. I'm such a little whisk of thistle-down that it

would annihilate me. Such a ponderous weight of wisdom attached to me would drag me under water, and drown me. I should let go my line, I think, if I felt such a fish bite."

"You are tolerably safe in our times," said Clayton. "Nature only sends such men once in a century or two. They are the road-makers for the rest of the world. They are quarry-masters, that quarry out marble enough for a generation to work up."

"Well," said Nina, "I should n't want to be a quarry-master's wife. I should be afraid that some of his blocks would fall on me."

"Why, would n't you like it, if he were wholly your slave?" said Frank Russel. "It would be like having the genius of the lamp at your feet."

"Ah," said Nina, "if *I* could keep him my slave; but I'm afraid he'd outwit me at last. Such a man would soon put *me* up on a shelf for a book read through. I've seen some great men, — I mean great for our times, — and they did n't seem to care half as much for their wives as they did for a newspaper."

"O," said Anne, "that's past praying for, with any husband. The newspaper is the standing rival of the American lady. It must be a warm lover that can be attracted from *that*, even before he is secure of his prize."

"You are severe, Miss Anne," said Russel.

"She only speaks the truth. You men are a bad set," said Nina. "You are a kind of necessary evil, half civilized at best. But if ever *I* set up an establishment, I shall insist upon taking precedence of the newspaper."

CHAPTER VII.

TIFF'S GARDEN.

WOULD the limits of our story admit of it, we should gladly linger many days in the shady precincts of Magnolia Grove, where Clayton and Nina remained some days longer, and where the hours flew by on flowery feet; but the inevitable time and tide, which wait for no man, wait not for the narrator. We must therefore say, in brief, that when the visit was concluded, Clayton accompanied Nina once more to Canema, and returned to the circle of his own duties.

Nina returned to her own estate, with views somewhat chastened and modified by her acquaintance with Anne. As Clayton supposed, the influence of a real noble purpose in life had proved of more weight than exhortations, and she began to feel within herself positive aspirations for some more noble and worthy life than she had heretofore led. That great, absorbing feeling which determines the whole destiny of woman's existence, is in its own nature an elevating and purifying one. It is such even when placed on an unworthy object, and much more so when the object is a worthy one. Since the first of their friendship, Clayton had never officiously sought to interfere with the growth and development of Nina's moral nature. He had sufficient sagacity to perceive that, unconsciously to herself, a deeper power of feeling, and a wider range of thought, was opening within her; and he left the development of it to the same quiet forces which swell the rosebud and guide the climbing path of the vine. Simply and absolutely he lived his own

life before her, and let hers alone; and the power of his life therefore became absolute.

A few mornings after her return, she thought that she would go out and inquire after the welfare of our old friend Tiff. It was a hazy, warm, bright summer morning, and all things lay in that dreamy stillness, that trance of voluptuous rest, which precedes the approach of the fiercer heats of the day. Since her absence there had been evident improvement in Tiff's affairs. The baby, a hearty, handsome little fellow, by dint of good nursing, pork-sucking, and lying out doors in the tending of breezes and zephyrs, had grown to be a creeping creature, and followed Tiff around, in his garden ministrations, with unintelligible chatterings of delight.

At the moment when Nina rode up, Tiff was busy with his morning work in the garden.

His appearance, it is to be confessed, was somewhat peculiar. He usually wore, in compliment to his nursing duties, an apron in front; but, as his various avocations pressed hard upon his time, and as his own personal outfit was ever the last to be attended to, Tiff's nether garments had shown traces of that frailty which is incident to all human things.

"Bress me," he said to himself, that morning, as he with difficulty engineered his way into them, "holes here, and holes dar! Don't want but two holes in my breeches, and I's got two dozen! Got my foot through de wrong place! Por old Tiff! Laws a massy! wish I could get hold of some of dem dar clothes dey were telling 'bout at de camp-meeting, dey wore forty years in de wilderness! 'Mazing handy dem ar times was! Well, any how, I'll tie an apron behind, and anoder in front. Bress de Lord, I's got aprons, any how! I must make up a par of breeches, some of dese yer days, when de baby's teeth is all through, and Teddy's clothes don't want no mending, and de washing is done, and dese yer weeds stops a growing in de garden. Bress if I know what de Lord want of so many weeds. 'Pears like dey comes just to plague us; but, den, we does n't

know. May be dere's some good in 'em. We does n't know but a leetle, no way."

Tiff was sitting on the ground weeding one of his garden-beds, when he was surprised by the apparition of Nina on horseback coming up to the gate. Here was a dilemma, to be sure! No cavalier had a more absolute conception of the nature of politeness, and the claims of beauty, rank, and fashion, than Tiff. Then, to be caught sitting on the ground, with a blue apron on in front, and a red one on behind, was an appalling dilemma! However, as our readers may have discovered, Tiff had that essential requisite of good breeding, the moral courage to face an exigency; and, wisely considering that a want of cordiality is a greater deficiency than the want of costume, he rose up, without delay, and hastened to the gate to acknowledge the honor.

"Lord bress yer sweet face, Miss Nina!" he said, while the breezes flapped and fluttered his red and blue sails, "Old Tiff's 'mazin' happy to see you. Miss Fanny's well, thank ye; and Mas'r Teddy and the baby all doing nicely. Bress de Lord, Miss Nina, be so good as to get down and come in. I's got some nice berries dat I picked in de swamp, and Miss Fanny 'll be proud to have you take some. You see," he said, laughing heartily, and regarding his peculiar costume, "I was n't looking for any quality long dis yer time o' day, so I just got on my old clothes."

"Why, Uncle Tiff, I think they become you immensely!" said Nina. "Your outfit is really original and picturesque. You're not one of the people that are ashamed of their work, are you, Uncle Tiff? So, if you just lead my horse to that stump, I'll get down."

"Laws, no, Miss Nina!" said Tiff, as with alacrity he obeyed her orders. "Spects, if Old Tiff was 'shamed of work, he'd have a heap to be 'shamed of; cause it's pretty much all work with him. 'Tis so!"

"Tomtit pretended to come with me," said Nina, as she looked round; "but he lagged behind by the brook to get some of those green grapes, and I suspect it's the last I

shall see of him. So, Tiff, if you please to tie Sylphine in the shade, I'll go in to see Miss Fanny."

And Nina tripped lightly up the walk, now bordered on either side by china asters and marigolds, to where Fanny was standing bashfully in the door waiting for her. In her own native woods this child was one of the boldest, freest, and happiest of romps. There was scarce an eligible tree which she could not climb, or a thicket she had not explored. She was familiar with every flower, every bird, every butterfly, of the vicinity. She knew precisely when every kind of fruit would ripen, and flower would blossom; and was so *au fait* in the language of birds and squirrels, that she might almost have been considered one of the fraternity. Her only companion and attendant, Old Tiff, had that quaint, fanciful, grotesque nature which is the furthest possible removed from vulgarity; and his frequent lectures on proprieties and conventionalities, his long and prolix narrations of her ancestral glories and distinctions, had succeeded in infusing into her a sort of childish consciousness of dignity, while at the same time it inspired her with a bashful awe of those whom she saw surrounded with the actual insignia and circumstances of position and fortune. After all, Tiff's method of education, instinctive as it was, was highly philosophical, since a certain degree of self-respect is the nurse of many virtues, and a shield from many temptations. There is also something, perhaps, in the influence of descent. Fanny certainly inherited from her mother a more delicate organization than generally attends her apparent station in life. She had, also, what perhaps belongs to the sex, a capability of receiving the mysteries and proprieties of dress; and Nina, as she stood on the threshold of the single low room, could not but be struck with the general air of refinement which characterized both it and its little mistress. There were flowers from the swamps and hedges arranged with care and taste, feathers of birds, strings of eggs of different color, dried grasses, and various little woodland curiosities, which

showed a taste refined by daily intercourse with nature. Fanny herself was arrayed in a very pretty print dress, which her father had brought home in a recent visit, with a cape of white muslin. Her brown hair was brushed smoothly from her forehead, and her clear blue eyes, and fair, rosy complexion, gave her a pleasing air of intelligence and refinement.

"Thank you," said Nina, as Fanny offered her the only chair the establishment afforded; "but I'm going with Tiff out in the garden. I never can bear to be in the house such days as this. You didn't expect me over so early, Uncle Tiff; but I took a notable turn, this morning, and routed them up to an early breakfast, on purpose that I might have time to get over here before the heat came on. It's pleasant out here, now the shadow of the woods falls across the garden so. How beautifully those trees wave! Tiff, go on with your work — never mind me."

"Yes, Miss Nina, it's mighty pleasant. Why, I was out in dis yer garden at four o'clock dis morning, and 'peared like dese yer trees was waving like a psalm, so sort o' still, you know! Kind o' spreading out der hands like dey 'd have prayers; and dere was a mighty handsome star a looking down. I spects dat ar star is one of de very oldest families up dar."

"Most likely," said Nina, cheerily. "They call it Venus, the star of love, Uncle Tiff; and I believe that is a very old family."

"Love is a mighty good ting, any how," said Tiff. "Lord bress you, Miss Nina, it makes everyting go kind o' easy. Sometimes, when I'm studding upon dese yer tings, I says to myself, 'pears like de trees in de wood, dey loves each oder. Dey stands kind o' locking arms so, and dey kind o' nod der heads, and whispers so! 'Pears like de grapevines, and de birds, and all dem ar tings, dey lives comfortable togeder, like dey was peaceable, and liked each oder. Now, folks is apt to get a stewin' and a frettin' round, and turning up der noses at dis yer ting, and dat

ar ; but 'pears like de Lord's works takes everyting mighty easy. Dey just kind o' lives along peaceable. I tink it 's mighty 'structive ! ”

“ Certainly it is,” said Nina. “ Old Mother Nature is an excellent manager, and always goes on making the best of everything.”

“ Dere 's heaps done dat ar way, and no noise,” said Tiff. “ Why, Miss Nina, I studies upon dat ar out here in my garden. Why, look at dat ar corn, way up over your head, now ! All dat ar growed dis yer summer. No noise 'bout it — 'pears like nobody could n't see when 't was done. Dey were telling us in camp-meeting how de Lord created de heaven and de earth. Now, Miss Nina, Tiff has his own thoughts, you know ; and Tiff says, 'pears like de Lord is creating de heaven and de earth all de time. 'Pears like you can see Him a doing of it right afore your face ; and dem growing tings are so curus ! Miss Nina, 'pears for all de world like as if dey was critters ! 'Pears like each of 'em has der own way, and won't go no oder ! Dese yer beans, dey will come up so curus right top o' de stalks ; dey will turn round de pole one way, and, if you was to tie 'em, you could n't make 'em go round t' oder ! Dey 's set in der own way — dey is, for all dey 's so still 'bout it ! Laws, Miss Nina, dese yer tings makes Tiff laugh — does so ! ” he said, sitting down, and indulging in one of his fits of merriment.

“ You are quite a philosopher, Tiff,” said Nina.

“ Laws, Miss Nina, I hopes not ! ” said Tiff, solemnly ; “ 'cause one of de preachers at de camp-meeting used up dem folk terrible, I tell you ! Dat ar pretty much all I could make out of de sermon, dat people must n't be 'losophers ! Laws, Miss Nina, I hope I an't no sich ! ”

“ O, I mean the good kind, Uncle Tiff. But how were you pleased, upon the whole, at the camp-meeting ? ” said Nina.

“ Well,” said Tiff, “ Miss Nina, I hope I got something — I don't know fa'rly how much 'tis. But, Miss Nina, it

'pears like as if you had come out here to instruct us 'bout dese yer tings. Miss Fanny, she don't read very well yet, and 'pears like if you could read us some out of de Bible, and teach us how to be Christians — "

"Why, Tiff, I scarcely know how myself!" said Nina. "I'll send Milly to talk to you. She is a real good Christian."

"Milly is a very nice woman," said Tiff, somewhat doubtfully; "but, Miss Nina, 'pears like I would rather have white teaching; 'pears like I would rather have you, if it would n't be too much trouble."

"O, no, Uncle Tiff! If you want to hear me read, I'll read to you now," said Nina. "Have you got a Bible, here? Stay; I'll sit down. I'll take the chair and sit down in the shade, and then you need n't stop your work."

Tiff hurried into the house to call Fanny; produced a copy of a Testament, which, with much coaxing, he had persuaded Cripps to bring on his last visit; and, while Fanny sat at her feet making larkspur rings, she turned over the pages, to think what to read. When she saw Tiff's earnest and eager attention, her heart smote her to think that the book, so valuable in his eyes, was to her almost an unread volume.

"What shall I read to you, Tiff? What do you want to hear?"

"Well, I wants to find out de shortest way I ken, how dese yer chil'en's to be got to heaven!" said Tiff. "Dis yer world is mighty well long as it holds out; but, den, yer see, it don't last forever! Tings is passing away!"

Nina thought a moment. The great question of questions, so earnestly proposed to her! The simple, childlike old soul hanging confidingly on her answer! At last she said, with a seriousness quite unusual with her:

"Tiff, I think the best thing I can do is to read to you about our Saviour. He came down into this world to show us the way to heaven. And I'll read you, when I come here days, all that there is about Him — all he said and did;

and then, perhaps, you 'll see the way yourself. Perhaps," she added, with a sigh, "I shall, too!"

As she spoke, a sudden breeze of air shook the clusters of a prairie-rose, which was climbing into the tree under which she was sitting, and a shower of rose-leaves fell around her.

"Yes," she said to herself, as the rose-leaves fell on her book, "it's quite true, what he says. Everything is passing!"

And now, amid the murmur of the pine-trees, and the rustling of the garden-vines, came on the ear of the listeners the first words of that sweet and ancient story:

"Now, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, behold there came wise men from the East, saying, 'Where is *He* that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship Him.'"

Probably more cultivated minds would have checked the progress of the legend by a thousand questions, statistical and geographical, as to where Jerusalem was, and who the wise men were, and how far the East was from Jerusalem, and whether it was probable they would travel so far. But Nina was reading to children, and to an old child-man, in whose grotesque and fanciful nature there was yet treasured a believing sweetness, like the amulets supposed to belong to the good genii of the fairy tales. The quick fancy of her auditors made reality of the story as it went along. A cloudy Jerusalem built itself up immediately in their souls, and became as well known to them as the neighboring town of E—. Herod, the king, became a real walking personage in their minds, with a crown on his head. And Tiff immediately discerned a resemblance between him and a certain domineering old General Eaton, who used greatly to withstand the cause of virtue, and the Peytons, in the neighborhood where he was brought up. Tiff's indignation, when the slaughter of the innocents was narrated, was perfectly outrageous. He declared "He wouldn't have believed that of King Herod, bad as he

was!" and, good-hearted and inoffensive as Tiff was in general, it really seemed to afford him comfort, "dat de debil had got dat ar man 'fore now."

"Sarves him right, too!" said Tiff, striking fiercely at a weed with his hoe. "Killing all dem por little chil'en! Why, what harm had dey done him, any way? Wonder what he thought of hisself!"

Nina found it necessary to tranquillize the good creature, to get a hearing for the rest of the story. She went on reading of the wild night-journey of the wise men, and how the star went before them till it stood over the place where the child was. How they went in, and saw the young child, and Mary his mother, and fell down before him, offering gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

"Lord bless you! I wish I'd a been dar!" said Tiff. "And dat ar chile was de Lord of glory, sure 'nough, Miss Nina! I hearn 'em sing dis yer hymn at de camp-meeting, —you know, 'bout cold on his cradle. You know it goes dis yer way." And Tiff sung, to a kind of rocking lullaby, words whose poetic imagery had hit his fancy before he knew their meaning.

"Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining,
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore, in slumber reclining,
Maker, and Saviour, and Monarch of all."

Nina had never realized, till she felt it in the undoubting faith of her listeners, the wild, exquisite poetry of that legend, which, like an immortal lily, blooms in the heart of Christianity as spotless and as tender now as eighteen hundred years ago.

That child of Bethlehem, when afterwards he taught in Galilee, spoke of seed which fell into a good and honest heart; and words could not have been more descriptive of the nature which was now receiving this seed of Paradise.

When Nina had finished her reading, she found her own heart touched by the effect which she had produced. The

nursing, child-loving Old Tiff was ready, in a moment, to bow before his Redeemer, enshrined in the form of an infant; and it seemed as if the air around him had been made sacred by the sweetness of the story.

As Nina was mounting her horse to return, Tiff brought out a little basket full of wild raspberries.

"Tiff wants to give you something," he said.

"Thank you, Uncle Tiff. How delightful! Now, if you'll only give me a cluster of your Michigan rose!"

Proud and happy was Tiff, and, pulling down the very topmost cluster of his rose, he presented it to her. Alas! before Nina reached home, it hung drooping from the heat.

"The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WARNING.

IN life organized as it is at the South, there are two currents ; — one, the current of the master's fortunes, feelings, and hopes ; the other, that of the slave's. It is a melancholy fact in the history of the human race, as yet, that there have been multitudes who follow the triumphal march of life only as captives, to whom the voice of the trumpet, the waving of the banners, the shouts of the people, only add to the bitterness of enthrallment.

While life to Nina was daily unfolding in brighter colors, the slave-brother at her side was destined to feel an additional burden on his already unhappy lot.

It was toward evening, after having completed his daily cares, that he went to the post-office for the family letters. Among these, one was directed to himself, and he slowly perused it as he rode home through the woods. It was as follows :

MY DEAR BROTHER: I told you how comfortably we were living on our place — I and my children. Since then, everything has been changed. Mr. Tom Gordon came here and put in a suit for the estate, and attached me and my children as slaves. He is a dreadful man. The case has been tried and gone against us. The judge said that both deeds of emancipation — both the one executed in Ohio, and the one here — were of no effect ; that my boy was a slave, and could no more hold property than a mule before a plough. I had some good friends here, and people pitied

me very much ; but nobody could help me. Tom Gordon is a bad man — a *very* bad man. I cannot tell you all that he said to me. I only tell you that I will kill myself and my children before we will be his slaves. Harry, I have been *free*, and I know what liberty is. My children have been brought up *free*, and if I can help it they never shall know what slavery is. I have got away, and am hiding with a colored family here in Natchez. I hope to get to Cincinnati, where I have friends.

“My dear brother, I did hope to do something for you. Now I cannot. Nor can you do anything for me. The law is on the side of our oppressors ; but I hope God will help us. Farewell !

Your affectionate

“SISTER.”

It is difficult to fathom the feelings of a person brought up in a position so wholly unnatural as that of Harry. The feelings which had been cultivated in him by education, and the indulgence of his nominal possessors, were those of an honorable and gentlemanly man. His position was absolutely that of the common slave, without one legal claim to anything on earth, one legal right of protection in any relation of life. What any man of strong nature would feel on hearing such tidings from a sister, Harry felt.

In a moment there rose up before his mind the picture of Nina in all her happiness and buoyancy — in all the fortunate accessories in her lot. Had the vague thoughts which crowded on his mind been expressed in words, they might have been something like these :

“I have two sisters, daughters of one father, both beautiful, both amiable and good ; but one has rank, and position, and wealth, and ease, and pleasure ; the other is an outcast, unprotected, given up to the brutal violence of a vile and wicked man. She has been a good wife, and a good mother. Her husband has done all he could to save her ; but the cruel hand of the law grasps her and her children, and hurls them back into the abyss from which it was

his life-study to raise them. And I can do nothing! I am not even a man! And this curse is on me, and on my wife, and on my children and children's children, forever! Yes, what does the judge say, in this letter? 'He can no more own anything than the mule before his plough!' That's to be the fate of every child of mine! And yet people say, 'You have all you want; why are you not happy?' I wish they could try it! Do they think broadcloth coats and gold watches can comfort a man for all this?"

Harry rode along, with his hands clenched upon the letter, the reins drooping from the horse's neck, in the same unfrequented path where he had twice before met Dred. Looking up, he saw him the third time, standing silently, as if he had risen from the ground.

"Where did you come from?" said he. "Seems to me you are always at hand when anything is going against me!"

"Went not my spirit with thee?" said Dred. "Have I not seen it all? It is because we *will* bear this, that we have it to bear, Harry."

"But," said Harry, "what can we do?"

"Do? What does the wild horse do? Launch out our hoofs! rear up, and come down on them! What does the rattlesnake do? Lie in their path, and bite! Why did they make slaves of us? They tried the wild Indians first. Why did n't they keep to them? *They* would n't be slaves, and we *will*! They that *will* bear the yoke, *may* bear it!"

"But," said Harry, "Dred, this is all utterly hopeless. Without any means, or combination, or leaders, we should only rush on to our own destruction."

"Let us die, then!" said Dred. "What if we do die? What great matter is that? If they bruise our head, we can sting their heels! Nat Turner — they killed him; but the fear of him almost drove them to set free their slaves! Yes, it was argued among them. They came within two or three votes of it in their assembly. A little more fear, and they would have done it. If my father had succeeded, the

slaves in Carolina would be free to-day. Die? — Why not die? Christ was crucified! Has everything dropped out of you, that you can't die — that you 'll crawl like worms, for the sake of living?"

"I'm not afraid of death, myself," said Harry. "God knows I would n't care if I did die; but —"

"Yes, I know," said Dred. "She that letteth will let, till she be taken out of the way. I tell you, Harry, there's a seal been loosed — there's a vial poured out on the air; and the destroying angel standeth over Jerusalem, with his sword drawn!"

"What do you mean by that?" said Harry.

Dred stood silent, for a moment; his frame assumed the rigid tension of a cataleptic state, and his voice sounded like that of a person speaking from a distance, yet there was a strange distinctness in it.

"The words of the prophet, and the vision that he hath from the Lord, when he saw the vision, falling into a trance, and having his eyes open, and behold he saw a roll flying through the heavens, and it was written, within and without, with mourning and lamentation and woe! Behold, it cometh! Behold, the slain of the Lord shall be many! They shall fall in the house and by the way! The bride shall fall in her chamber, and the child shall die in its cradle! There shall be a cry in the land of Egypt, for there shall not be a house where there is not one dead!"

"Dred! Dred! Dred!" said Harry, pushing him by the shoulder; "come out of this — come out! It's frightful!"

Dred stood looking before him, with his head inclined forward, his hand upraised, and his eyes strained, with the air of one who is trying to make out something through a thick fog.

"I see her!" he said. "Who is that by her? His back is turned. Ah! I see — it is he! And there's Harry and Milly! Try hard — try! You won't do it. No, no use sending for the doctor. There's not one to be had. They

are all too busy. Rub her hands! Yes. But—it's no good. 'Whom the Lord loveth, he taketh away from the evil to come.' Lay her down. Yes, it is Death! Death! Death!"

Harry had often seen the strange moods of Dred, and he shuddered now, because he partook somewhat in the common superstitions, which prevailed among the slaves, of his prophetic power. He shook and called him; but he turned slowly away, and, with eyes that seemed to see nothing, yet guiding himself with his usual dextrous agility, he plunged again into the thickness of the swamp, and was soon lost to view.

After his return home it was with the sensation of chill at his heart that he heard Aunt Nesbit reading to Nina portions of a letter, describing the march through some Northern cities of the cholera, which was then making fearful havoc on our American shore.

"Nobody seems to know how to manage it," the letter said; "physicians are all at a loss. It seems to spurn all laws. It bursts upon cities like a thunderbolt, scatters desolation and death, and is gone with equal rapidity. People rise in the morning well, and are buried before evening. In one day houses are swept of a whole family."

"Ah," said Harry, to himself, "I see the meaning now, but what does it portend to us?"

How the strange foreshadowing had risen to the mind of Dred, we shall not say. Whether there be mysterious electric sympathies which, floating through the air, bear dim presentiments, on their wings, or whether some stray piece of intelligence had dropped on his ear, and been interpreted by the burning fervor of his soul, we know not. The news, however, left very little immediate impression on the daily circle at Canema. It was a dread reality in the far distance. Harry only pondered it with anxious fear.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MORNING STAR.

NINA continued her visits to Tiff's garden on almost every pleasant morning or evening. Tiff had always some little offering, either berries or flowers, to present, or a nice little luncheon of fish or birds, cooked in some mode of peculiar delicacy; and which, served up in sylvan style, seemed to have something of the wild relish of the woods. In return, she continued to read the story so interesting to him; and it was astonishing how little explanation it needed — how plain honesty of heart, and lovingness of nature, interpreted passages over which theologians have wrangled in vain. It was not long before Tiff had impersonated to himself each of the disciples, particularly Peter; so that, when anything was said by him, Tiff would nod his head significantly, and say, "Ah, ah! dat ar 's just like him! He 's allers a puttin' in; but he 's a good man, arter all!"

What impression was made on the sensitive young nature, through whom, as a medium, Tiff received this fresh revelation, we may, perhaps, imagine. There are times in life when the soul, like a half-grown climbing vine, hangs wavering tremulously, stretching out its tendrils for something to ascend by. Such are generally the great transition periods of life, when we are passing from the ideas and conditions of one stage of existence to those of another. Such times are most favorable for the presentation of the higher truths of religion. In the hazy, slumberous stillness of that midsummer atmosphere, in the long, silent rides through the pines, Nina half awakened from the thoughtless

dreams of childhood, yearning for something nobler than she yet had lived for, thought over, and revolved in her mind, this beautiful and spotless image of God, revealed in man, which her daily readings presented; and the world that he created seemed to whisper to her in every pulsation of its air, in every breath of its flowers, in the fanning of its winds, "He still liveth, and he loveth thee." The voice of the Good Shepherd fell on the ear of the wandering lamb, calling her to his arms; and Nina found herself one day unconsciously repeating, as she returned through the woods, words which she had often heard read at church:

"When thou saidst unto me, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."

Nina had often dreaded the idea of becoming a Christian, as one shrinks from the idea of a cold, dreary passage, which must be passed to gain a quiet home. But suddenly, as if by some gentle invisible hand, the veil seemed to be drawn which hid the face of Almighty Love from her view. She beheld the earth and the heavens transfigured in the light of his smile. A strange and unspeakable joy arose within her, as if some loving presence were always near her. It was with her when she laid down at night, and when she awoke in the morning the strange happiness had not departed. Her feelings may be best expressed by an extract from a letter which she wrote at this time to Clayton.

"It seems to me that I have felt a greater change in me within the last two months than in my whole life before. When I look back at what I was in New York, three months ago, actually I hardly know myself. It seems to me in those old days that life was only a frolic to me, as it is to the kitten. I don't really think that there was much harm in me, only the want of good. In those days, sometimes I used to have a sort of dim longing to be better, particularly when Livy Ray was at school. It seemed as if she woke up something that had been asleep in me; but

she went away, and I fell asleep again, and life went on like a dream. Then I became acquainted with you, and you began to rouse me again, and for some time I thought I did n't like to wake ; it was just as it is when one lies asleep in the morning — it 's so pleasant to sleep and dream, that one resists any one who tries to bring them back to life. I used to feel quite pettish when I first knew you, and sometimes wished you 'd let me alone, because I saw that you belonged to a different kind of sphere from what I 'd been living in. And I had a presentiment that, if I let you go on, life would have to be something more than a joke with me. But *you would*, like a very indiscreet man as you are, you would insist on being in sober earnest.

“ I used to think that I had no heart ; I begin to think I have a good deal now. Every day it seems as if I could love more and more ; and a great many things are growing clear to me that I did n't use to understand, and I 'm growing happier every day.

“ You know my queer old protégé, Uncle Tiff, who lives in the woods here. For some time past I have been to his house every day, reading to him in the Testament, and it has had a very great effect on me. It affected me very much, in the first place, that he seemed so very earnest about religion, when I, who ought to know so much more, was so indifferent to it ; and when the old creature, with tears in his eyes, actually insisted upon it that I should show his children the road to heaven, then I began to read to him the Testament, the life of Jesus. I did n't know myself how beautiful it was — how suited to all our wants. It seemed to me I never saw so much beauty in anything before ; and it seems as if it had waked a new life in me. Everything is changed ; and it is the beauty of Christ that has changed it. You know I always loved beauty above all things, in music, in nature, and in flowers ; but it seems to me that I see something now in Jesus more beautiful than all. It seems as if all these had been shadows of beauty, but *he* is the substance. It is strange, but I have

a sense of him, his living and presence, that sometimes almost overpowers me. It seems as if he had been following me always, but I had not seen him. He has been a good shepherd, seeking the thoughtless lamb. He has, all my life, been calling me child; but till lately my heart has never answered, Father! Is this religion? Is this what people mean by conversion? I tried to tell Aunt Nesbit how I felt, because now I feel kinder to everybody; and really my heart smote me to think how much fun I had made of her, and now I begin to love her very much. She was so anxious I should talk with Mr. Titmarsh, because he is a minister. Well, you know I did n't want to do it, but I thought I ought to, because poor aunty really seemed to feel anxious I should. I suppose, if I were as perfect as I ought to be, a good man's stiff ways would n't trouble me so. But stiff people, you know, are my particular temptation.

"He came and made a pastoral call, the other day, and talked to me. I don't think he understood me very well, and I'm sure I did n't understand him. He told me how many kinds of faith there were, and how many kinds of love. I believe there were three kinds of faith, and two kinds of love; and he thought it was important to know whether I had got the right kind. He said we ought not to love God because he loves us, but because he is holy. He wanted to know whether I had any just views of sin, as an infinite evil; and I told him I had n't the least idea of what infinite was; and that I had n't any views of anything, but the beauty of Christ; that I did n't understand anything about the different sorts of faith, but that I felt perfectly sure that Jesus is so good that he would make me feel right, and give me right views, and do everything for me that I need.

"He wanted to know if I loved him because he magnified the law, and made it honorable; and I told him I did n't understand what that meant

"I don't think, on the whole, that the talk did me much

good. It only confused me, and made me very uncomfortable. But I went out to Old Tiff's in the evening, and read how Jesus received the little children. You never saw anybody so delighted as Old Tiff was. He got me to read it to him three or four times over; and now he gets me to read it every time I go there, and he says he likes it better than any other part of the Testament. Tiff and I get along very well together. He does n't know any more about faith than I do, and has n't any better views than I have. Aunt Nesbit is troubled about me, because I'm so happy. She says she's afraid I have n't any sense of sin. Don't you remember my telling you how happy I felt the first time I heard *real* music? I thought, before that, that I could sing pretty well; but in one hour all *my* music became trash in my eyes. And yet, I would not have missed it for the world. So it is now. That beautiful life of Jesus — so sweet, so calm, so pure, so unselfish, so perfectly *natural*, and yet so far beyond nature — has shown me what a poor, sinful, low creature I am; and yet I rejoice. I feel, sometimes, as I did when I first heard a full orchestra play some of Mozart's divine harmonies. I forgot that I was alive; I lost all thought of myself entirely; and I was perfectly happy. So it is now. This loveliness and beauty that I see makes me happy without any thought of myself. It seems to me, sometimes, that while I see it I never can suffer.

“There is another thing that is strange to me; and that is, that the Bible has grown so beautiful to me. It seems to me that it has been all my life like the transparent picture, without any light behind it; and now it is all illuminated, and its words are full of meaning to me. I am light-hearted and happy — happier than ever I was. Do you remember, the first day you came to Canema, that I told you it seemed so sad that we must die? That feeling is all gone, now. I feel that Jesus is everywhere, and that there is no such thing as dying; it is only going out of one room into another

“Everybody wonders to see how light-hearted I am; and

poor aunty says, 'she trembles for me.' I couldn't help thinking of that, the other morning I was reading to Tiff; what Jèsus said when they asked him why his disciples did not fast: 'Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn while the bridegroom is with them?'

"Now, my dear friend, you must tell me what you think of all this, because, you know, I always tell you everything. I have written to Livy about it, because I know it will make her so happy. Milly seems to understand it all, and what she says to me really helps me very much. I always used to think that Milly had some strange, beautiful kind of inward life, that I knew nothing of, because she would speak with so much certainty of God's love, and *act* as if it was so real to her; and she would tell me so earnestly, 'Chile, he loves you!' Now I see into it—that mystery of his love to us, and how he overcomes and subdues all things by love; and I understand how 'perfect love casteth out fear.' "

To this letter Nina soon received an answer, from which also we give an extract:

"If I was so happy, my dearest one, as to be able to awaken that deeper and higher nature which I always knew was in you, I thank God. But, if I ever was in any respect your teacher, you have passed beyond my teachings now. Your childlike simplicity of nature makes you a better scholar than I in that school where the first step is to forget all our worldly wisdom, and become a little child. We men have much more to contend with, in the pride of our nature, in our habits of worldly reasoning. It takes us long to learn the lesson that faith is the highest wisdom. Don't trouble your head, dear Nina, with Aunt Nesbit or Mr. Titmarsh. *What you feel is faith.* They *define* it, and you *feel* it. And there's all the difference between the definition and the feeling, that there is between the husk and the corn.

“As for me, I am less happy than you. Religion seems to me to have two parts to it. One part is the aspiration of man’s nature, and the other is God’s answer to those aspirations. I have, as yet, only the first; perhaps, because I am less simple and less true; perhaps, because I am not yet become a little child. So *you* must be my guide, instead of I *yours*; for I believe it is written of the faithful, that a little child shall lead them.

“I am a good deal tried now, my dear, because I am coming to a crisis in my life. I am going to take a step that will deprive me of many friends, of popularity, and that will, perhaps, alter all my course for the future. But, if I should lose friends and popularity, *you* would love me still, would you not? It is wronging you to ask such a question; but yet I should like to have you answer it. It will make me stronger for what I have to do. On Thursday of this week, my case will come on again. I am very busy just now; but the thought of you mingles with every thought.”

CHAPTER X.

THE LEGAL DECISION.

THE time for the session of the Supreme Court had now arrived, and Clayton's cause was to be reconsidered. Judge Clayton felt exceedingly chagrined, as the time drew near. Being himself the leading judge of the Supreme Court, the declaration of the bench would necessarily be made known through him.

"It is extremely painful to me," he said, to Mrs. Clayton, "to have this case referred to me; for I shall be obliged to reverse the decision."

"Well," said Mrs. Clayton, "Edward must have fortitude to encounter the usual reverses of his profession. He made a gallant defence, and received a great deal of admiration, which will not be at all lessened by this."

"You do not understand me," said Judge Clayton. "It is not the coming out in opposition to Edward which principally annoys me. It is the nature of the decision that I am obliged to make — the doctrine that I feel myself forced to announce."

"And must you, then?" said Mrs. Clayton.

"Yes, I must," said Judge Clayton. "A judge can only perceive and declare. What I see, I must speak, though it go against all my feelings and all my sense of right."

"I don't see, for my part," said Mrs. Clayton, "how that decision can possibly be reversed, without allowing the most monstrous injustice."

"Such is the case," said Judge Clayton; "but I sit in my seat, not to make laws, nor to alter them, but simply to

declare what they are. However bad the principle declared, it is not so bad as the proclamation of a falsehood would be. I have sworn truly to declare the laws, and I must keep my oath."

"And have you talked with Edward about it?"

"Not particularly. He understands, in general, the manner in which the thing lies in my mind."

This conversation took place just before it was time for Judge Clayton to go to his official duties.

The court-room, on this occasion, was somewhat crowded. Barker, being an active, resolute, and popular man, with a certain class, had talked up a considerable excitement with regard to his case. Clayton's friends were interested in it on his account; lawyers were, for the sake of the principle; so that, upon the whole, there was a good deal of attention drawn towards this decision.

Among the spectators on the morning of the court, Clayton remarked Harry. For reasons which our readers may appreciate, his presence there was a matter of interest to Clayton. He made his way toward him.

"Harry," he said, "how came you here?"

"The ladies," said Harry, "thought they would like to know how the thing went, and so I got on to my horse and came over."

As he spoke, he placed in Clayton's hand a note, and, as the paper touched his hand, a close spectator might have seen the color rise in his cheek. He made his way back to his place, and opened a law-book, which he held up before his face. Inside the law-book, however, was a little sheet of gilt-edged paper, on which were written a few words in pencil, more interesting than all the law in the world. Shall we commit the treason of reading over his shoulder? It was as follows:

"You say you may to-day be called to do something which you think right, but which will lose you many friends; which will destroy your popularity, which may alter all

your prospects in life ; and you ask if I can love you yet. I say, in answer, that it was not your friends that I loved, nor your popularity, nor your prospects, but *you*. I *can* love and honor a man who is not afraid nor ashamed to do what he thinks to be right ; and therefore I hope ever to remain yours,

NINA.

“ P. S. I only got your letter this morning, and have but just time to scribble this and send by Harry. We are all well, and shall be glad to see you as soon as the case is over.”

“ Clayton, my boy, you are very busy with your authorities,” said Frank Russel, behind him. Clayton hastily hid the paper in his hand.

“ It’s charming ! ” said Russel, “ to have little manuscript annotations on law. It lights it up, like the illuminations in old missals. But, say, Clayton, you live at the fountain-head ; — how is the case going ? ”

“ Against me ! ” said Clayton.

“ Well, it’s no great odds, after all. You have had your triumph. These after-thoughts cannot take away that. * * * But, hush ! There’s your father going to speak ! ”

Every eye in the court-room was turned upon Judge Clayton, who was standing with his usual self-poised composure of manner. In a clear, deliberate voice, he spoke as follows :

“ A judge cannot but lament, when such cases as the present are brought into judgment. It is impossible that the reasons on which they go can be appreciated, but where institutions similar to our own exist, and are *thoroughly understood*. The struggle, too, in the judge’s own breast, between the feelings of the man and the duty of the magistrate, is a severe one, presenting strong temptation to put aside such questions, if it be possible. It is useless, however, to complain of things inherent in our political state. And it is criminal in a court to avoid any responsibility which the laws impose. With whatever reluctance,

therefore, it is done, the court is compelled to express an opinion upon the extent of the dominion of the master over the slave in North Carolina. The indictment charges a battery on Milly, a slave of Louisa Nesbit. * * * *

“The inquiry here is, whether a cruel and unreasonable battery on a slave by the hirer is indictable. The judge below instructed the jury that it is. He seems to have put it on the ground, that the defendant had but a special property. Our laws uniformly treat the master, or other person having the possession and command of the slave; as entitled to the same extent of authority. *The object is the same, the service of the slave*; and the same powers must be confided. In a criminal proceeding, and, indeed, in reference to all other persons but the general owner, the hirer and possessor of the slave, in relation to both rights and duties, is, for the time being, the owner. * * * * But, upon the general question, whether the owner is answerable *criminaliter*, for a battery upon his own slave, or other exercise of authority or force, not forbidden by statute, the court entertains but little doubt. That he is so liable, has never been decided; nor, as far as is known, been hitherto contended. There has been no prosecution of the sort. The established habits and uniform practice of the country, in this respect, is the best evidence of the portion of power deemed by the whole community requisite to the preservation of the master’s dominion. If we thought differently, we could not set our notions in array against the judgment of everybody else, and say that this or that authority may be safely lopped off.

“This has indeed been assimilated at the bar to the other domestic relations: and arguments drawn from the well-established principles, which *confer* and *restrain* the authority of the parent over the child, the tutor over the pupil, the master over the apprentice, have been pressed on us.

“The court does not recognize their application. There is no likeness between the cases. They are in opposition to each other, and there is an impassable gulf between

them. The difference is that which exists between freedom and slavery ; and a greater cannot be imagined. In the one, the end in view is the happiness of the youth born to equal rights with that governor on whom the duty devolves of training the young to usefulness, in a station which he is afterwards to assume among freemen. To such an end, and with such a subject, moral and intellectual instruction seem the natural means ; and, for the most part, they are found to suffice. Moderate force is superadded only to make the others effectual. If that fail, it is better to leave the party to his own headstrong passions, and the ultimate correction of the law, than to allow it to be immoderately inflicted by a private person. With slavery it is far otherwise. The end is the profit of the master, his security, and the public safety ; the subject, one doomed, in his own person and his posterity, to live without knowledge, and without the capacity to make anything his own, and to toil that another may reap the fruits. What moral considerations shall be addressed to such a being, to convince him what it is impossible but that the most stupid must feel and know can never be true, — that he is thus to labor upon a principle of natural duty, or for the sake of his own personal happiness ? Such services can only be expected from one who has no will of his own ; who surrenders his will in implicit obedience to that of another. Such obedience is the consequence only of uncontrolled authority over the body. There is nothing else which can operate to produce the effect. THE POWER OF THE MASTER MUST BE ABSOLUTE, TO RENDER THE SUBMISSION OF THE SLAVE PERFECT. I most freely confess my sense of the harshness of this proposition. I feel it as deeply as any man can. And, as a principle of moral right, every person in his retirement must repudiate it. But, in the actual condition of things, it must be so. There is no remedy. This discipline belongs to the state of slavery. They cannot be disunited without abrogating at once the rights of the master, and absolving the slave from his subjection. It constitutes the curse of slavery to both the

bond and the free portions of our population. But it is *inherent in the relation* of master and slave. That there may be particular instances of cruelty and deliberate barbarity, where in conscience the law might properly interfere, is most probable. The difficulty is to determine where a *court* may properly begin. Merely in the abstract, it may well be asked which power of the master accords with right. The answer will probably sweep away all of them. But we cannot look at the matter in that light. The truth is that we are forbidden to enter upon a train of general reasoning on the subject. We cannot allow the right of the master to be brought into discussion in the courts of justice. The slave, to remain a slave, must be made sensible that there is no appeal from his master; that his power is, in no instance, usurped, but is conferred by the laws of man, at least, if not by the law of God. The danger would be great, indeed, if the tribunals of justice should be called on to graduate the punishment appropriate to every temper, and every dereliction of menial duty.

“No man can anticipate the many and aggravated provocations of the master which the slave would be constantly stimulated by his own passions, or the instigation of others, to give; or the consequent wrath of the master, prompting him to bloody vengeance upon the turbulent traitor; a vengeance *generally practised with impunity, by reason of its privacy*. The court, therefore, disclaims the power of changing the relation in which these parts of our people stand to each other.

* * * * *

“I repeat, that I would gladly have avoided this ungrateful question. But, being brought to it, the court is compelled to declare that while slavery exists amongst us in its present state, or until it shall seem fit to the legislature to interpose express enactments to the contrary, it will be the imperative *duty* of the judges to recognize the full dominion of the owner over the slave, except where the exercise of it is forbidden by statute.

“ And this we do upon the ground that *this dominion is essential to the value of slaves as property, to the security of the master and the public tranquillity, greatly dependent upon their subordination* ; and, in fine, as most effectually securing the general protection and comfort of the slaves themselves. Judgment below reversed ; and judgment entered for the defendant.”

During the delivery of the decision Clayton's eyes, by accident, became fixed upon Harry, who was standing opposite to him, and who listened through the whole with breathless attention. He observed, as it went on, that his face became pale, his brow clouded, and that a fierce and peculiar expression flashed from his dark-blue eye. Never had Clayton so forcibly realized the horrors of slavery as when he heard them thus so calmly defined in the presence of one into whose soul the iron had entered. The tones of Judge Clayton's voice, so passionless, clear, and deliberate ; the solemn, calm, unflinching earnestness of his words, were more than a thousand passionate appeals. In the dead silence that followed, Clayton rose, and requested permission of the court to be allowed to say a few words in view of the decision. His father looked slightly surprised, and there was a little movement among the judges. But curiosity, perhaps, among other reasons, led the court to give consent. Clayton spoke :

“ I hope it will not be considered a disrespect or impertinence for me to say that the law of slavery, and the nature of that institution, have for the first time been made known to me to-day in their true character. I had before flattered myself with the hope that it might be considered a guardian institution, by which a stronger race might assume the care and instruction of the weaker one ; and I had hoped that its laws were capable of being so administered as to protect the defenceless. This illusion is destroyed. I see but too clearly now the purpose and object of the law. I cannot, therefore, as a Christian man, remain in the practice of law in a slave state. I therefore relinquish the profession, into

which I have just been inducted, and retire forever from the bar of my native state."

"There! — there! — there he goes!" said Frank Russel. "The sticking-point has come at last. His conscience is up, and start him now who can!"

There was a slight motion of surprise in the court and audience. But Judge Clayton sat with unmoved serenity. The words had struck to the depth of his soul. They had struck at the root of one of his strongest hopes in life. But he had listened to them with the same calm and punctilious attention which it was his habit to give to every speaker; and, with unaltered composure, he proceeded to the next business of the court.

A step so unusual occasioned no little excitement. But Clayton was not one of the class of people to whom his associates generally felt at liberty to express their opinions of his conduct. The quiet reserve of his manners discouraged any such freedom. As usual, in cases where a person takes an uncommon course from conscientious motives, Clayton was severely criticized. The more trifling among the audience contented themselves with using the good set phrases, quixotic, absurd, ridiculous. The elder lawyers, and those friendly to Clayton, shook their heads, and said, rash, precipitate, unadvised. "There's a want of ballast about him, somewhere!" said one. "He is unsound!" said another. "Radical and impracticable!" added a third.

"Yes," said Frank Russel, who had just come up, "Clayton is as radical and impracticable as the sermon on the mount, and that's the most impracticable thing I know of in literature. We all *can* serve God and Mammon. We have discovered that happy medium in our day. Clayton is behind the times. He is *Jewish* in his notions. Don't you think so, Mr. Titmarsh?" addressing the Rev. Mr. Titmarsh.

"It strikes me that our young friend is extremely *ultra*," said Mr. Titmarsh. "I might feel disposed to sympathize with him in the feelings he expressed, *to some extent*; but,

it having pleased the Divine Providence to establish the institution of slavery, I humbly presume it is not competent for human reason to judge of it."

"And if it had pleased the Divine Providence to have established the institution of piracy, you'd say the same thing, I suppose!" said Frank Russel.

"Certainly, my young friend," said Mr. Titmarsh. "Whatever is divinely ordered, becomes right by that fact."

"I should think," said Frank Russel, "that things were divinely ordered because they were right."

"No, my friend," replied Mr. Titmarsh, moderately; "they are right because they are ordered, however contrary they may appear to any of our poor notions of justice and humanity." And Mr. Titmarsh walked off.

"Did you hear that?" said Russel. "And they expect really to come it over us with stuff like that! Now, if a fellow don't go to church Sundays, there's a dreadful outcry against him for not being religious! And, if they get us there, that's the kind of thing they put down our throats! As if they were going to make practical men give in to such humbugs!"

And the Rev. Mr. Titmarsh went off in another direction, lamenting to a friend as follows:

"How mournfully infidelity is increasing among the young men of our day! They quote Scripture with the same freedom that they would a book of plays, and seem to treat it with no more reverence! I believe it's the want of catechetical instruction while they are children. There's been a great falling back in the teaching of the Assembly's Catechism to children when they are young! I shall get that point up at the General Assembly. If that were thoroughly committed when they are children, I think they would never doubt afterwards."

Clayton went home and told his mother what he had done, and why. His father had not spoken to him on this subject; and there was that about Judge Clayton which

made it difficult to introduce a topic, unless he signified an inclination to enter upon it. He was, as usual, calm, grave, and considerate, attending to every duty with unwearying regularity.

At the end of the second day, in the evening, Judge Clayton requested his son to walk in to his study. The interview was painful on both sides.

"You are aware, my son," he said, "that the step you have taken is a very painful one to me. I hope that it was not taken precipitately, from any sudden impulse."

"You may rest assured it was not," said Clayton. "I followed the deepest and most deliberate convictions of my conscience."

"In that case, you could not do otherwise," replied Judge Clayton. "I have no criticisms to make. But will your conscience allow you to retain the position of a slaveholder?"

"I have already relinquished it," replied Clayton, "so far as my own intentions are concerned. I retain the legal relation of owner simply as a means of protecting my servants from the cruelties of the law, and of securing the opportunity to educate and elevate them."

"And suppose this course brings you into conflict with the law of the state?" said Judge Clayton.

"If there is any reasonable prospect of having the law altered, I must endeavor to do that," said Clayton.

"But," said Judge Clayton, "suppose the law is so rooted in the nature of the institution, that it cannot be repealed without uprooting the institution? What then?"

"I say repeal the law, if it do uproot the institution," said Clayton. "*Fiat justitia ruat cælum.*"

"I supposed that would be your answer," said Judge Clayton, patiently. "That is undoubtedly the logical line of life. But you are aware that communities do not follow such lines; your course, therefore, will place you in opposition to the community in which you live Your conscien-

tious convictions will cross self-interest, and the community will not allow you to carry them out."

"Then," said Clayton, "I must, with myself and my servants, remove to some region where I can do this."

"That I supposed would be the result," said Judge Clayton. "And have you looked at the thing in all its relations and consequences?"

"I have," said Clayton.

"You are about to form a connection with Miss Gordon," said Judge Clayton. "Have you considered how this will affect her?"

"Yes," said Clayton. "Miss Gordon fully sustains me in the course I have taken."

"I have no more to say," said Judge Clayton. "Every man must act up to his sense of duty."

There was a pause of a few moments, and Judge Clayton added:

"You, perhaps, have seen the implication which your course throws upon us who still continue to practise the system and uphold the institution which you repudiate."

"I meant no implications," said Clayton.

"I presume not. But they result, logically, from your course," said his father. "I assure you, I have often myself pondered the question with reference to my own duties. My course is a sufficient evidence that I have not come to the same result. Human law is, at best, but an approximation, a reflection of many of the ills of our nature. Imperfect as it is, it is, on the whole, a blessing. The worst system is better than anarchy."

"But, my father, why could you not have been a reformer of the system?"

"My son, no reform is possible, unless we are prepared to give up the institution of slavery. That will be the immediate result; and this is so realized by the instinct of self-preservation, which is unfailing in its accuracy, that every such proposition will be ignored, till there is a settled conviction in the community that the institution itself is a

moral evil, and a sincere determination felt to be free from it. I see no tendency of things in that direction. That body of religious men of different denominations, called, par excellence, the church, exhibit a degree of moral apathy on this subject which is to me very surprising. It is with them that the training of the community, on which any such reform could be built, must commence; and I see no symptoms of their undertaking it. The decisions and testimonies of the great religious assemblies in the land, in my youth, were frequent. They have grown every year less and less decided; and now the morality of the thing is openly defended in our pulpits, to my great disgust. I see no way but that the institution will be left to work itself out to its final result, which will, in the end, be ruinous to our country. I am not myself gifted with the talents of a reformer. My turn of mind fits me for the situation I hold. I cannot hope that I have done no harm in it; but the good, I hope, will outweigh the evil. If you feel a call to enter on this course, fully understanding the difficulties and sacrifices it would probably involve, I would be the last one to throw the influence of my private wishes and feelings into the scale. We live here but a few years. It is of more consequence that we should do right, than that we should enjoy ourselves."

Judge Clayton spoke this with more emotion than he usually exhibited, and Clayton was much touched.

"My dear father," he said, putting Nina's note into his hand, "you made allusion to Miss Gordon. This note, which I received from her on the morning of your decision, will show you what her spirit is."

Judge Clayton put on his spectacles, and read over the note deliberately, twice. He then handed it formally to his son, and remarked, with his usual brevity,

"She will do!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE CLOUD BURSTS.

THE shadow of that awful cloud which had desolated other places now began to darken the boundaries of the plantation of Canema. No disease has ever more fully filled out the meaning of those awful words of Scripture, "The pestilence that walketh in darkness." None has been more irregular, and apparently more perfectly capricious, in its movements. During the successive seasons that it has been epidemic in this country, it has seemed to have set at defiance the skill of the physicians. The system of medical tactics which has been wrought out by the painful experience of one season seems to be laughed to scorn by the varying type of the disease in the next. Certain sanitary laws and conditions would seem to be indispensable; yet those who are familiar with it have had fearful experience how like a wolf it will sometimes leap the boundaries of the best and most carefully-guarded fold, and, spite of every caution and protection, sweep all before it.

Its course through towns and villages has been equally singular. Sometimes, descending like a cloud on a neighborhood, it will leave a single village or town untouched amidst the surrounding desolations, and long after, when health is restored to the whole neighborhood, come down suddenly on the omitted towns, as a ravaging army sends back a party for prey to some place which has been overlooked or forgotten. Sometimes, entering a house, in twenty-four hours it will take all who are in it. Sometimes it will ravage all the city except some one street or locality,

and then come upon that, while all else is spared. Its course, upon Southern plantations, was marked by similar capriciousness, and was made still more fatal by that peculiar nature of plantation life which withdraws the inmates so far from medical aid.

When the first letters were received describing the progress of it in northern cities, Aunt Nesbit felt much uneasiness and alarm. It is remarkable with what tenacity people often will cling to life, whose enjoyments in it are so dull and low that a bystander would scarcely think them worth the struggle of preservation. When at length the dreaded news began to be heard from one point and another in their vicinity, Aunt Nesbit said, one day, to Nina,

"Your cousins, the Gordons, in E., have written to us to leave the plantation, and come and spend some time with them, till the danger is over."

"Why," said Nina, "do they think the cholera can't come there?"

"Well," said Aunt Nesbit, "they have their family under most excellent regulations; and, living in a town so, they are within call of a doctor, if anything happens."

"Aunt," said Nina, "perhaps you had better go; but I will stay with my people."

"Why, don't you feel afraid, Nina?"

"No, aunt, I don't. Besides, I think it would be very selfish for me to live on the services of my people all my life, and then run away and leave them alone when a time of danger comes. The least I can do is to stay and take care of them."

This conversation was overheard by Harry, who was standing with his back to them, on the veranda, near the parlor door where they were sitting.

"Child," said Aunt Nesbit, "what do you suppose you can do? You have n't any experience. Harry and Milly can do a great deal better than you can. I'll leave Milly here. It's our first duty to take care of our health."

"No, aunt, I think there are some duties before that,"

said Nina. "It's true I have n't a great deal of strength, but I have courage; and I know my going away would discourage our people, and fill them with fear; and that, they say, predisposes to the disease. I shall get the carriage up, and go directly over to see the doctor, and get directions and medicines. I shall talk to our people, and teach them what to do, and see that it is done. And, when they see that I am calm, and not afraid, they will have courage. But, aunt, if you are afraid, I think you had better go. You are feeble; you can't make much exertion; and if you feel any safer or more comfortable, I think it would be best. I should like to have Milly stay, and she, Harry, and I, will be a board of health to the plantation."

"Harry," she said, "if you'll get up the carriage, we'll go immediately."

Again Harry felt the bitterness of his soul sweetened and tranquillized by the noble nature of her to whose hands the law had given the chain which bound him. Galling and intolerable as it would have been otherwise, he felt, when with her, that her service was perfect freedom. He had not said anything to Nina about the contents of the letter which he had received from his sister. He saw that it was an evil which she had no power over, and he shrank from annoying her with it. Nina supposed that his clouded and troubled aspect was caused wholly by the solicitude of responsibility.

In the same carriage which conveyed her to the town sat Aunt Nesbit also, and her cap-boxes, whose importance even the fear of the cholera could not lessen in her eyes. Nina found the physician quite *au fait* on the subject. He had been reading about miasma and animalculæ, and he entertained Nina nearly half an hour with different theories as to the cause of the disease, and with the experiments which had been made in foreign hospitals.

Among the various theories, there was one which appeared to be his particular pet; and Nina couldn't help thinking, as he stepped about so alertly, that he almost en-

joyed the prospect of putting his discoveries to the test. By dint, however, of very practical and positive questions, Nina drew from him all the valuable information which he had to give her; and he wrote her a very full system of directions, and put up a case of medicines for her, assuring her that he should be happy to attend in person if he had time.

On the way home, Nina stopped at Uncle John Gordon's plantation, and there had the first experience of the difference between written directions for a supposed case, and the actual awful realities of the disease. Her Uncle John had been seized only half an hour before, in the most awful manner. The household was all in terror and confusion, and the shrieks and groans of agony which proceeded from his room were appalling. His wife, busy with the sufferer, did not perceive that the messengers who had been sent in haste for the doctor were wringing their hands in fruitless terror, running up and down the veranda, and doing nothing.

"Harry," said Nina, "take out one of the carriage-horses, and ride quick for your life, and bring the doctor over here in a minute!"

In a few moments the thing was done, and Harry was out of sight. She then walked up to the distracted servants, and commanded them, in a tone of authority, to cease their lamentations. Her resolute manner, and the quiet tone of voice which she preserved, acted as a sedative on their excited nerves. She banished all but two or three of the most reasonable from the house, and then went to the assistance of her aunt.

Before long the doctor arrived. When he had been in the sick room a few moments, he came out to make some inquiries of Nina, and she could not help contrasting the appalled and confounded expression of his countenance with the dapper, consequential air, with which, only two hours before, he had been holding forth to her on animalculæ and miasma.

"The disease," he said, "presented itself in an entirely

different aspect from what he had expected. The remedies," he said, "did not work as he anticipated; the case was a peculiar one."

Alas! before the three months were over, poor doctor, you found many peculiar cases!

"Do you think you can save his life?" said Nina.

"Child, only God can save him!" said the physician; "nothing works right."

But why prolong the torture of that scene, or rehearse the struggles, groans, and convulsions? Nina, poor flowery child of seventeen summers, stood with the rest in mute despair. All was tried that could be done or thought of; but the disease, like some blind, deaf destroyer, marched on, turning neither to right nor left, till the cries and groans grew fainter, the convulsed muscles relaxed, and the strong, florid man lay in the last stages of that fearful collapse which in one hour shrivels the most healthy countenance and the firmest muscles to the shrunken and withered image of decrepid old age. When the breath had passed, and all was over, Nina could scarcely believe that that altered face and form, so withered and so worn, could have been her healthy and joyous uncle, and who never had appeared healthier or more joyous than on that morning. But, as a person passing under the foam and spray of Niagara clings with blind confidence to a guide whom he feels, but cannot see, Nina, in this awful hour, felt that she was not alone. The Redeemer, all-powerful over death and the grave, of whom she had been thinking so much, of late, seemed to her sensibly near. And it seemed to her as if a voice said to her, continually, "Fear not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God."

"How calm you are, my child!" said Aunt Maria to her. "I would n't have thought it was in you. I don't know what we should do without you."

But now a frightful wail was heard.

"O, we are all dying! we are all going! O, missis,

come quick ! Peter has got it ! O, daddy has got it ! O, my child ! my child ! ”

And the doctor, exhausted as he was by the surprise and excitement of this case, began flying from one to another of the cabins, in the greatest haste. Two or three of the house-servants also seemed to be struck in the same moment, and only the calmness and courage which Nina and her aunt maintained prevented a general abandonment to panic. Nina possessed that fine, elastic temperament which, with the appearance of extreme delicacy, possesses great powers of endurance. The perfect calmness which she felt enabled her to bring all her faculties to bear on the emergency.

“ My good aunty, you must n’t be afraid ! Bring out your religion ; trust in God,” she said, to the cook, who was wringing her hands in terror. “ Remember your religion ; sing some of your hymns, and do your duty to the sick.”

There is a magic power in the cheerful tone of courage, and Nina succeeded in rallying the well ones to take care of the sick ; but now came a messenger, in hot haste, to say that the cholera had broken out on the plantation at home.

“ Well, Harry,” said Nina, with a face pale, yet unmoved, “ our duty calls us away.”

And, accompanied by the weary physician, they prepared to go back to Canema. Before they had proceeded far, a man met them on horseback.

“ Is Dr. Butler with you ? ”

“ Yes,” said Nina, putting her head out of the carriage.

“ O, doctor, I’ve been riding all over the country after you. You must come back to town this minute ! Judge Peters is dying ! I’m afraid he is dead before this time, and there’s a dozen more cases right in that street. Here, get on to my horse, and ride for your life.”

The doctor hastily sprang from the carriage, and mounted the horse ; then, stopping a moment, he cast a look of

good-natured pity on the sweet, pale face that was leaning out of the carriage window.

"My poor child," he said, "I can't bear to leave you. Who will help you?"

"God," said Nina; "I am not afraid!"

"Come, come," said the man, "do hurry!" And, with one hasty glance more, he was gone.

"Now, Harry," said Nina, "everything depends upon our keeping up our courage and our strength. We shall have no physician. We must just do the best we can. After all, it is our Lord Jesus that has the keys of death, and *he* loved us and died for us. He will certainly be with us."

"O, Miss Nina, you are an angel!" said Harry, who felt at that moment as if he could have worshipped her.

Arrived at home, Nina found a scene of terror and confusion similar to that she had already witnessed. Old Hundred lay dead in his cabin, and the lamenting crowd, gathering round, were yielding to the full tide of fear and excitement, which predisposed them to the same fate. Nina rode up immediately to the group. She spoke to them calmly; she silenced their outcries, and bade them obey her.

"If you wish, all of you, to die," she said, "this is the way towards it; but, if you'll keep quiet and calm, and do what ought to be done, your lives may be saved. Harry and I have got medicines—we understand what to do. You must follow our directions exactly."

Nina immediately went to the house, and instructed Milly, Aunt Rose, and two or three of the elderly women, in the duties to be done. Milly rose up, in this hour of terror, with all the fortitude inspired by her strong nature.

"Bress de Lord," she said, "for his grace to you, chile! De Lord is a shield. He's been wid us in six troubles, and he'll be wid us in seven. We can sing in de swellings of Jordan."

Harry, meanwhile, was associating to himself a band of the most reliable men on the place, and endeavoring in the same manner to organize them for action. A messenger

was despatched immediately to the neighboring town for unlimited quantities of the most necessary medicines and stimulants. The plantation was districted off, and placed under the care of leaders, who held communication with Harry. In the course of two or three hours, the appalling scene of distress and confusion was reduced to the resolute and orderly condition of a well-managed hospital.

Milly walked the rounds in every direction, appealing to the religious sensibilities of the people, and singing hymns of trust and confidence. She possessed a peculiar voice, suited to her large development of physical frame, almost as deep as a man's bass, with the rich softness of a feminine tone; and Nina could now and then distinguish, as she was moving about the house or grounds, that triumphant tone, singing,

“ God is my sun,
And he my shade,
To guard my head,
By night or noon.
Hast thou not given thy word
To save my soul from death?
And I can trust my Lord,
To keep my mortal breath.
I'll go and come,
Nor fear to die,
Till from on high
Thou call me home.”

The house that night presented the aspect of a beleaguered garrison. Nina and Milly had thrown open all the chambers; and such as were peculiarly exposed to the disease, by delicacy of organization or tremulousness of nervous system, were allowed to take shelter there.

“ Now, chile,” said Milly, when all the arrangements had been made, “ you jes lie down and go to sleep in yer own room. I see how 't is with you; de spirit is willing, but de flesh is weak. Chile, dere is n't much of you, but dere won't nothing go widout you. So, you take care of yerself first. Never you be 'fraid! De people's quiet now, and de

sick ones is ben took care of, and de folks is all doing de best dey can. So, now, you try and get some sleep ; 'cause if *you* goes we shall *all* go."

Accordingly Nina retired to her room, but before she lay down she wrote to Clayton :

" We are all in affliction here, my dear friend. Poor Uncle John died this morning of the cholera. I had been to E—— to see a doctor and provide medicines. When I came back I thought I would call a few moments at the house, and I found a perfect scene of horror. Poor uncle died, and there are a great many sick on the place now ; and while I was thinking that I would stay and help aunt, a messenger came in all haste, saying that the disease had broken out on our place at home.

" We were bringing the doctor with us in our carriage, when we met a man riding full speed from E——, who told us that Judge Peters was dying, and a great many others were sick on the same street. When we came home we found the poor old coachman dead, and the people in the greatest consternation. It took us some time to tranquillize them and to produce order, but that is now done. Our house is full of the sick and the fearful ones. Milly and Harry are firm and active, and inspire the rest with courage. About twenty are taken with the disease, but not as yet in a violent way. In this awful hour I feel a strange peace, which the Bible truly says ' passeth all understanding.' I see, now, that though the world and all that is in it should perish, ' Christ can give us a beautiful immortal life.' I write to you because, perhaps, this may be the only opportunity. If I die, do not mourn for me, but thank God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. But, then, I trust, I shall not die. I hope to live in this world, which is more than ever beautiful to me. Life has never been so valuable and dear as since I have known you. Yet I have such trust in the love of my Redeemer, that, if *he* were to ask me to lay it down, I could do it almost without

a sigh. I would follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Perhaps the same dreadful evil is around you, — perhaps at Magnolia Grove. I will not be selfish in calling you here, if Anne needs you more. Perhaps she has not such reliable help as Harry and Milly are to me. So do not fear, and do not leave any duty for me. Our Father loves us, and will do nothing amiss. Milly walks about the entries singing. I love to hear her sing, she sings in such a grand, triumphant tone. Hark, I hear her now!

‘ I ’ll go and come,
Nor fear to die,
Till from on high
Thou call me home.’

“ I shall write you every mail, now, till we are better.

“ Living or dying, ever your own

“ NINA.”

After writing this, Nina laid down and slept — slept all night as quietly as if death and disease were not hanging over her head. In the morning she rose and dressed herself, and Milly, with anxious care, brought to her room some warm coffee and crackers, which she insisted on her taking before she left her apartment.

“ How are they all, Milly ? ” said Nina.

“ Well, chile,” said Milly, “ de midnight cry has been heard among us. Aunt Rose is gone ; and Big Sam, and Jack, and Sally, dey ’s all gone ; but de people is all more quiet, love, and dey ’s determined to stand it out ! ”

“ How is Harry ? ” said Nina, in a tremulous voice.

“ He is n’t sick ; he has been up all night working over de sick, but he keeps up good heart. De older ones is going to have a little prayer-meeting after breakfast, as a sort of funeral to dem dat ’s dead ; and, perhaps, Miss Nina, you ’d read us a chapter.”

“ Certainly I will,” said Nina.

It was yet an early hour, when a large circle of family

and plantation hands gathered together in the pleasant, open saloon, which we have so often described. The day was a beautiful one; the leaves and shrubbery round the veranda moist and tremulous with the glittering freshness of morning dew. There was a murmur of tenderness and admiration as Nina, in a white morning-wrapper, and a cheek as white, came into the room.

"Sit down, all my friends," she said, "sit down," looking at some of the plantation-men, who seemed to be diffident about taking the sofa, which was behind them; "it's no time for ceremony now. We are standing on the brink of the grave, where all are equal. I'm glad to see you so calm and so brave. I hope your trust is in the Saviour, who gives us the victory over death. Sing," she said. Milly began the well-known hymn:

"And must this feeble body fail,
And must it faint and die?
My soul shall quit this gloomy vale,
And soar to realms on high;

"Shall join the disembodied saints,
And find its long-sought rest;
That only rest for which it pants,
On the Redeemer's breast."

Every voice joined, and the words rose triumphant from the very gates of the grave. When the singing was over, Nina, in a tremulous voice, which grew clearer as she went on, read the undaunted words of the ancient psalm:

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress. My God, in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers. Under his wings shalt thou trust. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that

wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall by thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand ; but it shall not come nigh thee. He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways."

"It is possible," said Nina, "that we may, some of us, be called away. But, to those that love Christ, there is no fear in death. It is only going home to our Father. Keep up courage, then !"

In all cases like this, the first shock brings with it more terror than any which succeeds. The mind can become familiar with anything, even with the prospect of danger and death, so that it can appear to be an ordinary condition of existence. Everything proceeded calmly on the plantation ; and all, stimulated by the example of their young mistress, seemed determined to meet the exigency firmly and faithfully. In the afternoon of the second day, as Nina was sitting in the door, she observed the wagon of Uncle Tiff making its way up the avenue ; and, with her usual impulsiveness, ran down to meet her humble friend.

"O, Tiff, how do you do, in these dreadful times !"

"O, Miss Nina," said the faithful creature, removing his hat, with habitual politeness, "ef yer please, I's brought de baby here, 'cause it's drefful sick, and I's been doing all I could for him, and he don't get no better. And I's brought Miss Fanny and Teddy, 'cause I's 'fraid to leave 'em, 'cause I see a man yesterday, and he tell me dey was dying eberywhar on all de places round."

"Well," said Nina, "you have come to a sorrowful place, for they are dying here, too ! But, if you feel any safer here, you and the children may stay, and we'll do for you just as we do for each other. Give me the baby, while you get out. It's asleep, is n't it ?"

"Yes, Miss Nina, it's 'sleep pretty much all de time, now."

Nina carried it up the steps, and put it into the arms of Milly.

"It's sleeping nicely," she said.

“ Ah, honey ! ” said Milly, “ it ’ll neber wake up out of dat ar ! Dat ar sleep an’t de good kind ! ”

“ Well,” said Nina, “ we ’ll help him take care of it, and we ’ll make room for him and the children, Milly ; because we have medicines and directions, and they have nothing out there.”

So Tiff and his family took shelter in the general fortress. Towards evening, the baby died. Tiff held it in his arms to the very last ; and it was with difficulty that Nina and Milly could persuade him that the little flickering breath was gone forever. When forced to admit it, he seemed for a few moments perfectly inconsolable. Nina quietly opened her Testament, and read to him :

“ And they brought little children unto him, that he should touch them ; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

“ Bressed Lord ! ” said Tiff, “ I ’ll gib him up, I will ! I won’t hold out no longer ! I won’t forbid him to go, if it does break my old heart ! Laws, we ’s drefful selfish ! But de por little ting, he was getting so pretty ! ”

CHAPTER XII.

THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS.

CLAYTON was quietly sitting in his law-office, looking over and arranging some papers necessary to closing his business. A colored boy brought in letters from the mail. He looked them over rapidly ; and, selecting one, read it with great agitation and impatience. Immediately he started, with the open letter crushed in his hand, seized his hat, and rushed to the nearest livery-stable.

“ Give me the fastest horse you have — one that can travel night and day ! ” he said. “ I must ride for life or death ! ”

And half an hour more saw Clayton in full speed on the road. By the slow, uncertain, and ill-managed mail-route, it would have taken three days to reach Canema. Clayton hoped, by straining every nerve, to reach there in twenty-four hours. He pushed forward, keeping the animal at the top of his speed ; and, at the first stage-stand, changed him for a fresh one. And thus proceeding along, he found himself, at three o'clock of the next morning, in the woods about fifteen miles from Canema. The strong tension of the nervous system, which had upheld him insensible to fatigue until this point, was beginning slightly to subside. All night he had ridden through the loneliness of pine-forests, with no eye looking down on him save the twinkling, mysterious stars. At the last place where he had sought to obtain horses, everything had been horror and confusion. Three were lying dead in the house, and another was dying. All along upon the route, at every stopping-place, the air

had seemed to be filled with flying rumors and exaggerated reports of fear and death. As soon as he began to perceive that he was approaching the plantation, he became sensible of that shuddering dread which all of us may remember to have had, in slight degrees, in returning home after a long absence, under a vague expectation of misfortune, to which the mind can set no definite limits. When it was yet scarcely light enough to see, he passed by the cottage of Old Tiff. A strange impulse prompted him to stop and make some inquiries there, before he pushed on to the plantation. But, as he rode up, he saw the gate standing ajar, the door of the house left open ; and, after repeated callings, receiving no answer, he alighted, and, leading his horse behind him, looked into the door. The gloaming star-light was just sufficient to show him that all was desolate. Somehow this seemed to him like an evil omen. As he was mounting his horse, preparing to ride away, a grand and powerful voice rose from the obscurity of the woods before him, singing, in a majestic, minor-keyed tune, these words :

“Throned on a cloud our God shall come,
Bright flames prepare his way ;
Thunder and darkness, fire and storm,
Lead on the dreadful day !”

Wearied with his night ride, his nervous system strained to the last point of tension by the fearful images which filled his mind, it is not surprising that these sounds should have thrilled through the hearer with even a superstitious power. And Clayton felt a singular excitement, as, under the dim arcade of the pine-trees, he saw a dark figure approaching. He seemed to be marching with a regular tread, keeping time to the mournful music which he sung.

“Who are you ?” called Clayton, making an effort to recall his manhood.

“I ?” replied the figure, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness ! I am a sign unto this people of the judgment of the Lord !”

Our readers must remember the strange dimness of the hour, the wildness of the place and circumstances, and the singular quality of the tone in which the figure spoke. Clayton hesitated a moment, and the speaker went on :

“ I saw the Lord coming with ten thousand of his saints ! Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet ! Thy bow is made quite naked, O God, according to the oaths of the tribes ! I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction, and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble ! ”

Pondering in his mind what this wild style of address might mean, Clayton rode slowly onward. And the man, for such he appeared to be, came out of the shadows of the wood and stood directly in his path, raising his hand with a commanding gesture.

“ I know whom you seek,” he said ; “ but it shall not be given you ; for the star, which is called wormwood, hath fallen, and the time of the dead is come, that they shall be judged ! Behold, there sitteth on the white cloud *one* like the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle ! ”

Then, waving his hand above his head, with a gesture of wild excitement, he shouted :

“ Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe ! Behold, the wine-press shall be trodden without the city, and there shall be blood even to the horses’ bridles ! Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpets of the other angels, which are yet to sound ! ”

The fearful words pealed through the dim aisles of the forest like the curse of some destroying angel. After a pause, the speaker resumed, in a lower and more plaintive tone :

“ Weep ye not for the dead ! neither bewail her ! Behold, the Lamb standeth on Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written on their foreheads. These are they which

follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth ; and in their mouth is found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God. Behold the angel having the seal of God is gone forth, and she shall be sealed in her forehead unto the Lamb."

The figure turned away slowly, singing, as he made his way through the forest, in the same weird and funereal accents ; but this time the song was a wild, plaintive sound, like the tolling of a heavy bell :

" Ding dong ! dead and gone !
Farewell, father !
Bury me in Egypt's land,
By my dear mother !
Ding, dong ! ding, dong !
Dead and gone ! "

Clayton, as he slowly wound his way along the unfrequented path, felt a dim, brooding sense of mystery and terror creeping over him. The tones of the voice, and the wild style of the speaker, recalled the strange incident of the camp-meeting ; and, though he endeavored strenuously to reason with himself that probably some wild and excited fanatic, made still more frantic by the presence of death and destruction all around, was the author of these fearful denunciations, still he could not help a certain weight of fearful foreboding.

This life may be truly called a haunted house, built as it is on the very confines of the land of darkness and the shadow of death. A thousand living fibres connect us with the unknown and unseen state ; and the strongest hearts, which never stand still for any mortal terror, have sometimes hushed their very beating at a breath of a whisper from within the veil. Perhaps the most resolute unbeliever in spiritual things has hours of which he would be ashamed to tell, when he, too, yields to the powers of those awful affinities which bind us to that unknown realm.

It is not surprising that Clayton, in spite of himself,

should have felt like one mysteriously warned. It was a relief to him when the dusky dimness of the solemn dawn was pierced by long shafts of light from the rising sun, and the day broke gladsome and jubilant, as if sorrow, sighing, and death, were a dream of the night. During the whole prevalence of this fearful curse, it was strange to witness the unaltered regularity, splendor, and beauty, with which the movements of the natural world went on. Amid fears, and dying groans, and wailings, and sobs, and broken hearts, the sun rose and set in splendor, the dews twinkled, and twilight folded her purple veil heavy with stars; birds sung, waters danced and warbled, flowers bloomed, and everything in nature was abundant, and festive, and joyous.

When Clayton entered the boundaries of the plantation, he inquired eagerly of the first person he met for the health of its mistress.

“Thank God, she is yet alive!” said he. “It was but a dream, after all!”

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EVENING STAR.

THE mails in the State of North Carolina, like the prudential arrangements in the slave states generally, were very little to be depended upon; and therefore a week had elapsed after the mailing of Nina's first letter, describing the danger of her condition, before it was received by Clayton. During that time the fury of the shock which had struck the plantation appeared to have abated; and, while on some estates in the vicinity it was yet on the increase, the inhabitants of Canema began to hope that the awful cloud was departing from them. It was true that many were still ailing; but there were no new cases, and the disease in the case of those who were ill appeared to be yielding to nursing and remedies.

Nina had risen in the morning early, as her custom had been since the sickness, and gone the rounds, to inquire for the health of her people. Returned, a little fatigued, she was sitting in the veranda, under the shadow of one of the pillar-roses, enjoying the cool freshness of the morning. Suddenly the tramp of horse's feet was heard, and, looking, she saw Clayton coming up the avenue. There seemed but a dizzy, confused moment, before his horse's bridle was thrown to the winds, and he was up the steps, holding her in his arms.

"O, you are here yet, my rose, my bride, my lamb! God is merciful! This is too much! O, I thought you were gone!"

"No, dear, not yet," said Nina. "God has been with

us. We have lost a great many ; but God has spared me to you."

"Are you really well?" said Clayton, holding her off, and looking at her. "You look pale, my little rose!"

"That's not wonderful," said Nina; "I've had a great deal to make me look pale; but I am very well. I have been well through it all — never in better health — and, it seems strange to say it, but never happier. I have felt so peaceful, so sure of God's love!"

"Do you know," said Clayton, "that that peace alarms me — that strange, unearthly happiness? It seems so like what is given to dying people."

"No," said Nina, "I think that when we have no one but our Father to lean on, he comes nearer than he does any other time; and that is the secret of this happiness. But, come, — you look wofully tired; have you been riding all night?"

"Yes, ever since yesterday morning at nine o'clock. I have ridden down four horses to get to you. Only think, I did n't get your letter till a week after it was dated!"

"Well, perhaps that was the best," said Nina; "because I have heard them say that anybody coming suddenly and unprepared in the epidemic, when it is in full force, is almost sure to be taken by it immediately. But you must let me take care of you. Don't you know that I'm mistress of the fortress here — commander-in-chief and head-physician? I shall order you to your room immediately, and Milly shall bring you up some coffee, and then you must have some sleep. You can see with your eyes, now, that we are all safe, and there's nothing to hinder your resting. Come, let me lead you off, like a captive."

Released from the pressure of overwhelming fear, Clayton began now to feel the reaction of the bodily and mental straining which he had been enduring for the last twenty-four hours, and therefore he willingly yielded himself to the directions of his little sovereign. Retired to his room, after taking his coffee, which was served by Milly, he fell

into a deep and tranquil sleep, which lasted till some time in the afternoon. At first, overcome by fatigue, he slept without dreaming; but, when the first weariness was past, the excitement of the nervous system, under which he had been laboring, began to color his dreams with vague and tumultuous images. He thought that he was again with Nina at Magnolia Grove, and that the servants were passing around in procession, throwing flowers at their feet; but the wreath of orange-blossoms which fell in Nina's lap was tied with black crape. But she took it up, laughing, threw the crape away, and put the wreath on her head, and he heard the chòrus singing,

“ O, de North Carolina rose !
O, de North Carolina rose ! ”

And then the sound seemed to change to one of lamentation, and the floral procession seemed to be a funeral, and a deep, melancholy voice, like the one he had heard in the woods in the morning, sang,

“ Weep, for the rose is withered !
The North Carolina rose ! ”

He struggled heavily in his sleep, and, at last waking, sat up and looked about him. The rays of the evening sun were shining on the tree-tops of the distant avenue, and Nina was singing on the veranda below. He listened, and the sound floated up like a rose-leaf carried on a breeze :

“ The summer hath its heavy cloud,
The rose-leaf must fall,
But in our home joy wears no shroud —
Never doth it pall !
Each new morning ray
Leaves no sigh for yesterday —
No smile passed away
Would we recall ! ”

The tune was a favorite melody, which has found much

favor with the popular ear, and bore the title of "The Hindoo Dancing-Girl's Song ;" and is, perhaps, a fragment of one of those mystical songs in which oriental literature abounds, in which the joy and reünion of earthly love are told in shadowy, symbolic resemblance to the everlasting union of the blessed above. It had a wild, dreamy, soothing power, as verse after verse came floating in, like white doves from paradise, as if they had borne healing on their wings :

" Then haste to the happy land,
Where sorrow is unknown ;
But first in a joyous band,
I'll make thee my own.
Haste, haste, fly with me
Where love's banquet waits for thee ;
Thine all its sweets shall be,
Thine, thine, alone ! "

A low tap at his door at last roused him. The door was partly opened, and a little hand threw in a half-opened spray of monthly-rosebuds.

" There 's something to remind you that you are yet in the body ! " said a voice in the entry. " If you are rested, I'll let you come down, now."

And Clayton heard the light footsteps tripping down the stairs. He roused himself, and, after some little attention to his toilet, appeared on the veranda.

" Tea has been waiting for some time," said Nina. " I thought I'd give you a hint."

" I was lying very happy, hearing you sing," said Clayton. " You may sing me that song again."

" Was I singing ? " said Nina ; " why, I did n't know it ! I believe that 's my way of thinking, sometimes. I'll sing to you again, after tea. I like to sing."

After tea they were sitting again in the veranda, and the whole heavens were one rosy flush of filmy clouds.

" How beautiful ! " said Nina. " It seems to me I've enjoyed these things, this summer, as I never have be-

fore. It seemed as if I felt an influence from them going through me, and filling me, as the light does those clouds."

And, as she stood looking up into the sky, she began singing again the words that Clayton had heard before :

" I am come from the happy land,
Where sorrow is unknown ;
I have parted a joyous band,
To make thee mine own !
Haste, haste, fly with me,
Where love's banquet waits for thee ;
Thine all its sweets shall be —
Thine, thine, alone !

" The summer has its heavy cloud,
The rose-leaf must fall —"

She stopped her singing suddenly, left the veranda, and went into the house.

" Do you want anything?" said Clayton.

" Nothing," said she, hurriedly. " I'll be back in a moment."

Clayton watched, and saw her go to a closet in which the medicines and cordials were kept, and take something from a glass. He gave a start of alarm.

" You are not ill, are you?" he said, fearfully, as she returned.

" O, no ; only a little faint. We have become so prudent, you know, that if we feel the least beginning of any disagreeable sensation, we take something at once. I have felt this faintness quite often. It is n't much."

Clayton put his arm around her, and looked at her with a vague yearning of fear and admiration.

" You look so like a spirit," he said, " that I must hold you."

" Do you think I've got a pair of hidden wings?" she said, smiling, and looking gayly in his face.

" I am afraid so!" he said. " Do you feel quite well, now?"

"Yes, I believe so. Only, perhaps, we had better sit down. I think, perhaps, it is the reaction of so much excitement, makes me feel rather tired."

Clayton seated her on the settee by the door, still keeping his arm anxiously around her. In a few moments she drooped her head wearily on his shoulder.

"*You are ill!*" he said, in tones of alarm.

"No, no! I feel very well — only a little faint and tired. It seems to me it is getting a little cold here, isn't it?" she said, with a slight shiver.

Clayton took her up in his arms, without speaking, carried her in and laid her on the sofa, then rang for Harry and Milly.

"Get a horse, instantly," he said to Harry, as soon as he appeared, "and go for a doctor!"

"There's no use in sending," said Nina; "he is driven to death, and can't come. Besides, there's nothing the matter with me, only I am a little tired and cold. Shut the doors and windows, and cover me up. No, no, don't take me up stairs! I like to lie here; just put a shawl over me, that's all. I am thirsty, — give me some water!"

The fearful and mysterious disease, which was then in the ascendant, has many forms of approach and development. One, and the most deadly, is that which takes place when a person has so long and gradually imbibed the fatal poison of an infected atmosphere, that the resisting powers of nature have been insidiously and quietly subdued, so that the subject sinks under it, without any violent outward symptom, by a quiet and certain yielding of the vital powers, such as has been likened to the bleeding to death by an internal wound. In this case, before an hour had passed, though none of the violent and distressing symptoms of the disease appeared, it became evident that the seal of death was set on that fair young brow. A messenger had been despatched, riding with the desperate speed which love and fear can give, but Harry remained in attendance.

"Nothing is the matter with me — nothing is the matter,"

she said, "except fatigue, and this change in the weather. If I only had more over me! and, perhaps, you had better give me a little brandy, or some such thing. This is water, is n't it, that you have been giving me?"

Alas! it was the strongest brandy; but there was no taste, and the hartshorn that they were holding had no smell. And there was no change in the weather; it was only the creeping deadness, affecting the whole outer and inner membrane of the system. Yet still her voice remained clear, though her mind occasionally wandered.

There is a strange impulse, which sometimes comes in the restlessness and distress of dissolving nature, *to sing*; and, as she lay with her eyes closed, apparently in a sort of trance, she would sing, over and over again, the verse of the song which she was singing when the blow of the unseen destroyer first struck her.

" The summer hath its heavy cloud,
The rose-leaf must fall;
But in our land joy wears no shroud,
Never doth it pall."

At last she opened her eyes, and, seeing the agony of all around, the truth seemed to come to her.

"I think I'm called!" she said. "O, I'm so sorry for you all! Don't grieve so; my Father loves me so well, — he cannot spare me any longer. He wants me to come to him. That's all — don't grieve so. It's *home* I'm going to — *home*! 'T will be only a little while, and you'll come too, all of you. You are satisfied, are you not, Edward?"

And again she relapsed into the dreamy trance, and sang, in that strange, sweet voice, so low, so weak,

" In our land joy wears no shroud,
Never doth it pall."

Clayton, — what did he? What could he do? What have any of us done, who have sat holding in our arms a dear form, from which the soul was passing — the soul for which

gladly we would have given our own in exchange ! When we have felt it going with inconceivable rapidity from us ; and we, ignorant and blind, vainly striving, with this and that, to arrest the inevitable doom, feeling every moment that some *other* thing might be done to save, which is not done, and that that which we are doing may be only hastening the course of the destroyer ! O, those awful, agonized moments, when we watch the clock, and no physician comes, and every stroke of the pendulum is like the approaching step of death ! O, is there anything in heaven or earth for the despair of such hours ?

Not a moment was lost by the three around that dying bed, chafing those cold limbs, administering the stimulants which the dead, exhausted system no longer felt.

“ She doesn’t suffer ! Thank God, at any rate, for that ! ” said Clayton, as he knelt over her in anguish.

A beautiful smile passed over her face, as she opened her eyes and looked on them all, and said,

“ No, my poor friends, I don’t suffer. I ’m come to the land where they never suffer. I ’m only so sorry for you ! Edward,” she said to him, “ do you remember what you said to me once ? — It has come now. You must bear it like a man. God calls you to some work — don’t shrink from it. You are baptized with fire. It all lasts only a little while. It will be over soon, very soon ! Edward, take care of my poor people. Tell Tom to be kind to them. My poor, faithful, good Harry ! O ! I ’m going so fast ! ”

The voice sunk into a whispering sigh. Life now seemed to have retreated to the citadel of the brain. She lay apparently in the last sleep, when the footsteps of the doctor were heard on the veranda. There was a general spring to the door, and Dr. Butler entered, pale, haggard, and worn, from constant exertion and loss of rest.

He did not say in words that there was no hope, but his first dejected look said it but too plainly.

She moved her head a little, like one who is asleep, uneasily upon her pillow, opened her eyes once more, and said,

“ Good-by ! I will arise and go to my Father ! ”

The gentle breath gradually became fainter and fainter, — all hope was over ! The night walked on with silent and solemn footsteps — soft showers fell without, murmuring upon the leaves — within, all was still as death !

“ They watched her breathing through the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

“ So silently they seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As they had lent her half their powers
To eke her living out.

“ Their very hopes belied their fears,
Their fears their hopes belied —
They thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

“ For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed — she had
Another morn than ours.”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TIE BREAKS.

CLAYTON remained at Canema several days after the funeral. He had been much affected by the last charge given him by Nina, that he should care for her people ; and the scene of distress which he witnessed among them, at her death, added to the strength of his desire to be of service to them.

He spent some time in looking over and arranging Nina's papers. He sealed up the letters of her different friends, and directed them in order to be returned to the writers, causing Harry to add to each a memorandum of the time of her death. His heart sunk heavily when he reflected how little it was possible for any one to do for servants left in the uncontrolled power of a man like Tom Gordon. The awful words of his father's decision, with regard to the power of the master, never seemed so dreadful as now, when he was to see this unlimited authority passed into the hands of one whose passions were his only law. He recalled, too, what Nina had said of the special bitterness existing between Tom and Harry ; and his heart almost failed him when he recollected that the very step which Nina, in her generosity, had taken to save Lisette from his lawlessness, had been the means of placing her, without remedy, under his power. Under the circumstances, he could not but admire the calmness and firmness with which Harry still continued to discharge his duties to the estate ; visiting those who were still ailing, and doing his best to prevent their sinking into a panic which might predispose

to another attack of disease. Recollecting that Nina had said something of some kind of a contract, by which Harry's freedom was to be secured in case of her death, he resolved to speak with him on the subject. As they were together in the library, looking over the papers, Clayton said to him :

"Harry, is there not some kind of contract, or understanding, with the guardians of the estate, by which your liberty was secured in case of the death of your mistress?"

"Yes," said Harry, "there is such a paper. I was to have my freedom on paying a certain sum, which is all paid into five hundred dollars."

"I will advance you that money," said Clayton, unhesitatingly, "if that is all that is necessary. Let me see the paper."

Harry produced it, and Clayton looked it over. It was a regular contract, drawn in proper form, and with no circumstance wanting to give it validity. Clayton, however, knew enough of the law which regulates the condition in which Harry stood, to know that it was of no more avail in his case than so much blank paper. He did not like to speak of it, but sat reading it over, weighing every word, and dreading the moment when he should be called upon to make some remark concerning it; knowing, as he did, that what he had to say must dash all Harry's hopes,—the hopes of his whole life. While he was hesitating a servant entered and announced Mr. Jekyl; and that gentleman, with a business-like directness which usually characterized his movements, entered the library immediately after.

"Good-morning, Mr. Clayton," he said, and then, nodding patronizingly to Harry, he helped himself to a chair, and stated his business, without further preamble.

"I have received orders from Mr. Gordon to come and take possession of the estate and chattels of his deceased sister, without delay."

As Clayton sat perfectly silent, it seemed to occur to Mr. Jekyl that a few moral reflections of a general nature would

be in etiquette on the present occasion. He therefore added, in the tone of voice which he reserved particularly for that style of remark :

“ We have been called upon to pass through most solemn and afflicting dispensations of Divine Providence, lately. Mr. Clayton, these things remind us of the shortness of life, and of the necessity of preparation for death ! ”

Mr. Jekyl paused, and, as Clayton still sat silent, he went on :

“ There was no will, I presume ? ”

“ No,” said Clayton, “ there was not.”

“ Ah, so I supposed,” said Mr. Jekyl, who had now recovered his worldly tone. “ In that case, of course the whole property reverts to the heir-at-law, just as I had imagined.”

“ Perhaps Mr. Jekyl would look at this paper,” said Harry, taking his contract from the hand of Mr. Clayton, and passing it to Mr. Jekyl ; who took out his spectacles, placed them deliberately on his sharp nose, and read the paper through.

“ Were you under the impression,” said he, to Harry, “ that this is a legal document ? ”

“ Certainly,” said Harry. “ I can bring witnesses to prove Mr. John Gordon’s signature, and Miss Nina’s also.”

“ O, that’s all evident enough,” said Mr. Jekyl. “ I know Mr. John Gordon’s signature. But all the signatures in the world could n’t make it a valid contract. You see, my boy,” he said, turning to Harry, “ a slave, not being a person in the eye of the law, cannot have a contract made with him. The law, which is based on the old Roman code, holds him, *pro nullis, pro mortuis* ; which means, Harry, that he’s held as nothing — as dead, inert substance. That’s his position in law.”

“ I believe,” said Harry, in a strong and bitter tone, “ that is what religious people call a Christian institution ! ”

"Hey?" said Mr. Jekyl, elevating his eyebrows, "what's that?"

Harry repeated his remark, and Mr. Jekyl replied in the most literal manner:

"Of course it is. It is a divine ordering, and ought to be met in a proper spirit. There's no use, my boy, in rebellion. Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make one lump to honor, and another to dishonor?"

"Mr. Jekyl, I think it would be expedient to confine the conversation simply to legal matters," said Clayton.

"O, certainly," said Mr. Jekyl. "And this brings me to say that I have orders from Mr. Gordon to stay till he comes, and keep order on the place. Also that none of the hands shall, at any time, leave the plantation until he arrives. I brought two or three officers with me, in case there should be any necessity for enforcing order."

"When will Mr. Gordon be here?" said Clayton.

"To-morrow, I believe," said Mr. Jekyl. "Young man," he added, turning to Harry, "you can produce the papers and books, and I can be attending to the accounts."

Clayton rose and left the room, leaving Harry with the imperturbable Mr. Jekyl, who plunged briskly into the business of the accounts, talking to Harry with as much freedom and composure as if he had not just been destroying the hopes of his whole lifetime.

If, by any kind of inward clairvoyance, or sudden clearing of his mental vision, Mr. Jekyl could have been made to appreciate the anguish which at that moment overwhelmed the soul of the man with whom he was dealing, we deem it quite possible that he might have been moved to a transient emotion of pity. Even a thorough-paced political economist may sometimes be surprised in this way, by the near view of a case of actual irremediable distress; but he would soon have consoled himself by a species of mental algebra, that the greatest good of the greatest number was nevertheless secure; therefore there was no occasion to be troubled about infinitesimal amounts of suffering. In this way

people can reason away every kind of distress but their own ; for it is very remarkable that even so slight an ailment as a moderate tooth-ache will put this kind of philosophy entirely to rout.

"It appears to me," said Mr. Jekyl, looking at Harry, after a while, with more attention than he had yet given him, "that something is the matter with you, this morning. Are n't you well?"

"In body," said Harry, "I am well."

"Well, what is the matter, then?" said Mr. Jekyl.

"The matter is," said Harry, "that I have all my life been toiling for my liberty, and thought I was coming nearer to it every year ; and now, at thirty-five years of age, I find myself still a slave, with no hope of ever getting free !"

Mr. Jekyl perceived from the outside that there was something the matter inside of his human brother ; some unknown quantity in the way of suffering, such as his algebra gave no rule for ascertaining. He had a confused notion that this was an affliction, and that when people were in affliction they must be talked to ; and he proceeded accordingly to talk.

"My boy, this is a dispensation of Divine Providence !"

"I call it a dispensation of human tyranny !" said Harry.

"It pleased the Lord," continued Mr. Jekyl, "to foredoom the race of Ham —"

"Mr. Jekyl, that humbug don't go down with me ! I'm no more of the race of Ham than you are ! I'm Colonel Gordon's oldest son — as white as my brother, whom you say owns me ! Look at my eyes, and my hair, and say if any of the rules about Ham pertain to me !"

"Well," said Mr. Jekyl, "my boy, you must n't get excited. Everything must go, you know, by general rules. We must take that course which secures the greatest general amount of good on the whole ; and all such rules will work hard in particular cases. Slavery is a great missionary enterprise for civilizing and christianizing the degraded African."

“Wait till you see Tom Gordon’s management on this plantation,” said Harry, “and you’ll see what sort of a christianizing institution it is! Mr. Jekyl, you *know* better! You throw such talk as that in the face of your northern visitors, and you know all the while that Sodom and Gomorrah don’t equal some of these plantations, where nobody is anybody’s husband or wife in particular! You know all these things, and you dare talk to me about a missionary institution! What sort of missionary institutions are the great trading-marts, where they sell men and women? What are the means of grace they use there? And the dogs, and the negro-hunters!—those are for the greatest good, too! If your soul were in our souls’ stead, you’d see things differently.”

Mr. Jekyl was astonished, and said so. But he found a difficulty in presenting his favorite view of the case, under the circumstances; and we believe those ministers of the Gospel, and elders, who entertain similar doctrines, would gain some new views by the effort to present them to a live man in Harry’s circumstances. Mr. Jekyl never had a more realizing sense of the difference between the abstract and concrete.

Harry was now thoroughly roused. He had inherited the violent and fiery passions of his father. His usual appearance of studied calmness, and his habits of deferential address, were superinduced; they resembled the thin crust which coats over a flood of boiling lava, and which a burst of the seething mass beneath can shiver in a moment. He was now wholly desperate and reckless. He saw himself already delivered, bound hand and foot, into the hands of a master from whom he could expect neither mercy nor justice. He was like one who had hung suspended over an abyss, by grasping a wild rose; the frail and beautiful thing was broken, and he felt himself *going*, with only despair beneath him. He rose and stood the other side of the table, his hands trembling with excitement.

“Mr. Jekyl,” he said, “it is all over with me! Twenty

years of faithful service have gone for nothing. Myself and wife, and unborn child, are the slaves of a vile wretch! Hush, now! I will have my say for once! I've borne, and borne, and borne, and it shall come out! You men who call yourselves religious, and stand up for such tyranny,—you serpents, you generation of vipers,—how can you escape the damnation of hell? You keep the clothes of them who stone Stephen! You encourage theft, and robbery, and adultery, and you know it! You are worse than the villains themselves, who don't pretend to justify what they do. Now, go, tell Tom Gordon—go! I shall fight it out to the last! I've nothing to hope, and nothing to lose. Let him look out! They made sport of Samson,—they put out his eyes,—but he pulled down the temple over their heads, after all. Look out!”

There is something awful in an outburst of violent passion. The veins in Harry's forehead were swollen, his lips were livid, his eyes glittered like lightning; and Mr. Jekyl cowered before him.

“There will come a day,” said Harry, “when all this shall be visited upon you! The measure you have filled to us shall be filled to you *double*—mark my words!”

Harry spoke so loudly, in his vehemence, that Clayton overheard him, and came behind him silently into the room. He was pained, shocked, and astonished; and, obeying the first instinct, he came forward and laid his hand entreatingly on Harry's shoulder.

“My good fellow, you don't know what you are saying,” he said.

“Yes I do,” said Harry, “and my words will be true!”

Another witness had come behind Clayton—Tom Gordon, in his travelling-dress, with pistols at his belt. He had ridden over after Jekyl, and had arrived in time to hear part of Harry's frantic ravings.

“Stop!” he said, stepping into the middle of the room; “leave that fellow to me! Now, boy,” he said, fixing his dark and evil eye upon Harry, “you did n't know that your

master was hearing you, did you? The last time we met, you told me I was n't your master! *Now*, we'll see if you'll say that again! You went whimpering to your mistress, and got her to buy Lisette, so as to keep her out of *my* way! Now who owns her? — say! Do you see this?" he said, holding up a long, lithe gutta-percha cane. "This is what I whip dogs with, when they don't know their place! Now, sir, down on your knees, and ask pardon for your impudence, or I'll thrash you within an inch of your life!"

"I won't kneel to my younger brother!" said Harry.

With a tremendous oath, Tom struck him; and, as if a rebound from the stroke, Harry struck back a blow so violent as to send him stumbling across the room, against the opposite wall; then turned, quick as thought, sprang through the open window, climbed down the veranda, vaulted on to Tom's horse, which stood tied at the post, and fled as rapidly as lightning to his cottage door, where Lisette stood at the ironing-table. He reached out his hand, and said, "Up, quick, Lisette! Tom Gordon's here!" And before Tom Gordon had fairly recovered from the dizziness into which the blow had thrown him, the fleet blood-horse was whirling Harry and Lisette past bush and tree, till they arrived at the place where he had twice before met Dred.

Dred was standing there. "Even so," he said, as the horse stopped, and Harry and Lisette descended; "the vision is fulfilled! Behold, the Lord shall make thee a witness and commander to the people!"

"There's no time to be lost," said Harry.

"Well I know that," said Dred. "Come, follow me!"

And before sunset of that evening Harry and Lisette were tenants of the wild fastness in the centre of the swamp.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PURPOSE.

It would be scarcely possible to describe the scene which Harry left in the library. Tom Gordon was for a few moments stunned by the violence of his fall, and Clayton and Mr. Jekyl at first did not know but he had sustained some serious injury ; and the latter, in his confusion, came very near attempting his recovery, by pouring in his face the contents of the large ink-stand. Certainly, quite as appropriate a method, under the circumstances, as the exhortations with which he had deluged Harry. But Clayton, with more presence of mind, held his hand, and rang for water. In a few moments, however, Tom recovered himself, and started up furiously.

"Where is he?" he shouted, with a volley of oaths ; which made Mr. Jekyl pull up his shirt-collar, as became a good elderly gentleman, preparatory to a little admonition.

"My young friend — " he began.

"Blast you ! None of your *young friends* to me ! Where is he ? "

"He has escaped," said Clayton, quietly.

"He got right out of the window," said Mr. Jekyl.

"Confound you, why did n't you stop him ? " said Tom, violently.

"If that question is addressed to me," said Clayton, "I do not interfere in your family affairs."

"You *have* interfered, more than you ever shall again ! " said Tom, roughly. "But, there's no use talking now ; that fellow must be chased ! He thinks he's got away from

me — we'll see! I'll make such an example of him as shall be remembered!" He rang the bell violently. "Jim," he said, "did you see Harry go off on my horse?"

"Yes, sah!"

"Then, why in thunder did n't you stop him?"

"I tought Mas'r Tom sent him — did so!"

"You knew better, you dog! And now, I tell you, order out the best horses, and be on after him! And, if you don't catch him, it shall be the worse for you! — Stay! Get *me* a horse! I'll go myself."

Clayton saw that it was useless to remain any longer at Canema. He therefore ordered his horse, and departed. Tom Gordon cast an evil eye after him, as he rode away.

"I hate that fellow!" he said. "I'll make him mischief, one of these days, if I can!"

As to Clayton, he rode away in bitterness of spirit. There are some men so constituted that the sight of injustice, which they have no power to remedy, is perfectly maddening to them. This is a very painful and unprofitable constitution, so far as this world is concerned; but they can no more help it than they can the tooth-ache. Others may say to them, "Why, what is it to you? You can't help it, and it's none of your concern;" but still the fever burns on. Besides, Clayton had just passed through one of the great crises of life. All there is in that strange mystery of what man can feel for woman had risen like a wave within him; and, gathering into itself, for a time, the whole force of his being, had broken, with one dash, on the shore of death, and the waters had flowed helplessly backward. In the great void which follows such a crisis, the soul sets up a craving and cry for something to come in to fill the emptiness; and while the heart says no *person* can come into that desolate and sacred enclosure, it sometimes embraces a *purpose*, as in some sort a substitute.

In this manner, with solemnity and earnestness, Clayton resolved to receive as a life-purpose a struggle with this great system of injustice, which, like a parasitic weed, had

struck its roots through the whole growth of society, and was sucking thence its moisture and nourishment.

As he rode through the lonely pine-woods, he felt his veins throbbing and swelling with indignation and desire. And there arose within him that sense of power which sometimes seems to come over man like an inspiration, and leads him to say, "*This shall not be, and this shall be;*" as if he possessed the ability to control the crooked course of human events. He was thankful in his heart that he had taken the first step, by entering his public protest against this injustice, in quitting the bar of his native state. What was next to be done, how the evil was to be attacked, how the vague purpose fulfilled, he could not say. Clayton was not aware, any more than others in his situation have been, of what he was undertaking. He had belonged to an old and respected family, and always, as a matter of course, been received in all circles with attention, and listened to with respect. He who glides dreamily down the glassy surface of a mighty river floats securely, making his calculations to row upward. He knows nothing what the force of that seemingly glassy current will be when his one feeble oar is set against the whole volume of its waters. Clayton did not know that he was already a marked man; that he had touched a spot, in the society where he lived, which was vital, and which that society would never suffer to be touched with impunity. It was the fault of Clayton, and is the fault of all such men, that he judged mankind by himself. He could not believe that anything, except ignorance and inattention, could make men upholders of deliberate injustice. He thought all that was necessary was the enlightening of the public mind, the direction of general attention to the subject. In his way homeward he revolved in his mind immediate measures of action. This evil should no longer be tampered with. He would take on himself the task of combining and concentrating those vague impulses towards good which he supposed were existing in the community. He would take counsel of leading minds. He

would give his time to journeyings through the state; he would deliver addresses, write in the newspapers, and do what otherwise lies in the power of a free man who wishes to reach an utterly unjust law. Full of these determinations, Clayton entered again his father's house, after two days of solitary riding. He had written in advance to his parents of the death of Nina, and had begged them to spare him any conversation on that subject; and, therefore, on his first meeting with his mother and father, there was that painful blank, that heavy dulness of suffering, which comes when people meet together, feeling deeply on one absorbing subject, which must not be named. It was a greater self-denial to his impulsive, warm-hearted mother than to Clayton. She yearned to express sympathy; to throw herself upon his neck; to draw forth his feelings, and mingle them with her own. But there are some people with whom this is impossible; it seems to be their fate that they cannot speak of what they suffer. It is not pride nor coldness, but a kind of fatal necessity, as if the body were a marble prison, in which the soul were condemned to bleed and suffer alone. It is the last triumph of affection and magnanimity, when a loving heart can respect that suffering silence of its beloved, and allow that lonely liberty in which only some natures can find comfort.

Clayton's sorrow could only be measured by the eagerness and energy with which, in conversation, he pursued the object with which he endeavored to fill his mind.

"I am far from looking forward with hope to any success from your efforts," said Judge Clayton, "the evil is so radical."

"I sometimes think," said Mrs. Clayton, "that I regret that Edward began as he did. It was such a shock to the prejudices of people!"

"People have got to be shocked," said Clayton, "in order to wake them up out of old absurd routine. Use paralyzes us to almost every injustice; when people are shocked, they begin to think and to inquire."

"But would it not have been better," said Mrs. Clayton, "to have preserved your personal influence, and thus have insinuated your opinions more gradually? There is such a prejudice against abolitionists; and, when a man makes any sudden demonstration on this subject, people are apt to call him an abolitionist, and then his influence is all gone, and he can do nothing."

"I suspect," said Clayton, "there are multitudes now in every part of our state who are kept from expressing what they really think, and doing what they ought to do, by this fear. Somebody must brave this mad-dog cry; somebody must be willing to be odious; and I shall answer the purpose as well as anybody."

"Have you any definite plan of what is to be attempted?" said his father.

"Of course," said Clayton, "a man's first notions on such a subject must be crude; but it occurred to me, first, to endeavor to excite the public mind on the injustice of the present slave-law, with a view to altering it."

"And what points would you alter?" said Judge Clayton.

"I would give to the slave the right to bring suit for injury, and to be a legal witness in court. I would repeal the law forbidding their education, and I would forbid the separation of families."

Judge Clayton sat pondering. At length he said, "And how will you endeavor to excite the public mind?"

"I shall appeal first," said Clayton, "to the church and the ministry."

"You can try it," said his father.

"Why," said Mrs. Clayton, "these reforms are so evidently called for, by justice and humanity, and the spirit of the age, that I can have no doubt that there will be a general movement among all good people in their favor."

Judge Clayton made no reply. There are some cases where silence is the most disagreeable kind of dissent, because it admits of no argument in reply.

“ In my view,” said Clayton, “ the course of legal reform, in the first place, should remove all those circumstances in the condition of the slaves which tend to keep them in ignorance and immorality, and make the cultivation of self-respect impossible ; such as the want of education, protection in the family state, and the legal power of obtaining redress for injuries. After that, the next step would be to allow those masters who are so disposed to emancipate, giving proper security for the good behavior of their servants. They might then retain them as tenants. Under this system, emancipation would go on gradually ; only the best masters would at first emancipate, and the example would be gradually followed. The experiment would soon demonstrate the superior cheapness and efficiency of the system of free labor ; and self-interest would then come in, to complete what principle began. It is only the first step that costs. But it seems to me that in the course of my life I have met with multitudes of good people, groaning in secret under the evils and injustice of slavery, who would gladly give their influence to any reasonable effort which promises in time to ameliorate and remove them.”

“ The trouble is,” said Judge Clayton, “ that the system, though ruinous in the long run to communities, is immediately profitable to individuals. Besides this, it is a source of political influence and importance. The holders of slaves are an aristocracy supported by special constitutional privileges. They are united against the spirit of the age by a common interest and danger, and the instinct of self-preservation is infallible. No logic is so accurate.

“ As a matter of personal feeling, many slaveholders would rejoice in some of the humane changes which you propose ; but they see at once that any change endangers the perpetuity of the system on which their political importance depends. Therefore, they’ll resist you at the very outset, not because they would not, many of them, be glad to have justice done, but because they think they cannot afford it.

“They will have great patience with you — they will even have sympathy with you — so long as you confine yourself merely to the expression of feeling; but the moment your efforts produce the slightest movement in the community, then, my son, you will see human nature in a new aspect, and know more about mankind than you know now.”

“Very well,” said Clayton, “the sooner the better.”

“Well, Edward,” said Mrs. Clayton, “if you are going to begin with the ministry, why don’t you go and talk to your Uncle Cushing? He is one of the most influential among the Presbyterians in the whole state; and I have often heard him lament, in the strongest manner, the evils of slavery. He has told me some facts about its effect on the character of his church-members, both bond and free, that are terrible!”

“Yes,” said Judge Clayton, “your brother will do all that. He will lament the evils of slavery in private circles, and he will furnish you any number of facts, if you will not give his authority for them.”

“And don’t you think that he will be willing to do something?”

“No,” said Judge Clayton, “not if the cause is unpopular.”

“Why,” said Mrs. Clayton, “do you suppose that my brother will be deterred from doing his duty for fear of personal unpopularity?”

“No,” said Judge Clayton; “but your brother has the interest of Zion on his shoulders, — by which he means the Presbyterian organization, — and he will say that he can’t afford to risk his influence. And the same will be true of every leading minister of every denomination. The Episcopalians are keeping watch over Episcopacy, the Methodists over Methodism, the Baptists over Baptism. None of them dare espouse an unpopular cause, lest the others, taking advantage of it, should go beyond them in public favor.

None of them will want the odium of such a reform as this."

"But I don't see any odium in it," said Mrs. Clayton. "It's one of the noblest and one of the most necessary of all possible changes."

"Nevertheless," said Judge Clayton, "it will be made to appear extremely odious. The catch-words of abolition, incendiarism, fanaticism, will fly thick as hail. And the storm will be just in proportion to the real power of the movement. It will probably end in Edward's expulsion from the state."

"My father, I should be unwilling to think," said Clayton, "that the world is quite so bad as you represent it,—particularly the religious world."

"I was not aware that I was representing it as very bad," said Judge Clayton. "I only mentioned such facts as everybody can see about them. There are undoubtedly excellent men in the church."

"But," said Clayton, "did not the church, in the primitive ages, stand against the whole world in arms? If religion be anything, must it not take the lead of society, and be its sovereign and teacher, and not its slave?"

"I don't know as to that," said Judge Clayton. "I think you'll find the facts much as I have represented them. What the church was in the primitive ages, or what it ought to be now, is not at all to our purpose, in making practical calculations. Without any disrespect, I wish to speak of things just as they are. Nothing is ever gained by false expectations."

"O," said Mrs. Clayton, "you lawyers get so uncharitable! I'm quite sure that Edward will find brother ready to go heart and hand with him."

"I'm sure I shall be glad of it, if he does," said Judge Clayton.

"I shall write to him about it, immediately," said Mrs. Clayton, "and Edward shall go and talk with him. Courage, Edward! Our woman's instincts, after all, have some

prophetic power in them. At all events, we women will stand by you to the last."

Clayton sighed. He remembered the note Nina had written him on the day of the decision, and thought what a brave-hearted little creature she was; and, like the faint breath of a withered rose, the shadowy remembrance of her seemed to say to him, "Go on!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEW MOTHER.

THE cholera at length disappeared, and the establishment of our old friend Tiff proceeded as of yore. His chickens and turkeys grew to maturity, and cackled and strutted joyously. His corn waved its ripening flags in the September breezes. The grave of the baby had grown green with its first coat of grass, and Tiff was comforted for his loss, because, as he said, "he knowed he 's better off." Miss Fanny grew healthy and strong, and spent many long sunny hours wandering in the woods with Teddy; or, sitting out on the bench where Nina had been wont to read to them, would spell out with difficulty, for her old friend's comfort and enlightenment, the half-familiar words of the wondrous story that Nina had brought to their knowledge.

The interior of the poor cottage bore its wonted air of quaint, sylvan refinement; and Tiff went on with his old dream of imagining it an ancestral residence, of which his young master and mistress were the head, and himself their whole retinue. He was sitting in his tent door, in the cool of the day, while Teddy and Fanny had gone for wild grapes, cheerfully examining and mending his old pantaloons, meanwhile recreating his soul with a cheerful conversation with himself.

"Now, Old Tiff," said he, "one more patch on dese yer, 'cause it an't much matter what you wars. Mas'r is allers a promising to bring home some cloth fur to make a more 'specable pair; but, laws, he never does nothing he says he will. An't no trusting in dat 'scription o' people,

—jiggeting up and down de country, drinking at all de taverns, fetching disgrace on de fam'ly, spite o' all I can do! Mighty long time since he been home, any how! Should n't wonder if de cholera 'd cotched him! Well, de Lord's will be done! Pity to kill such critturs! Would n't much mind if he should die. Laws, he an't much profit to de family, coming home here wid lots o' old trash, drinking up all my chicken-money down to 'Bijah Skinflint's! For my part, I believe dem devils, when dey went out o' de swine, went into de whiskey-bar'l. Dis yer liquor makes folks so ugly! Teddy shan't never touch none as long as dere 's a drop o' Peyton blood in *my* veins! Lord, but dis yer world is full o' 'spensations! Por, dear Miss Nina, dat was a doing for de chil'en! she 's gone up among de angels! Well, bress de Lord, we must do de best we can, and we 'll all land on de Canaan shore at last."

And Tiff uplifted a quavering stave of a favorite melody :

" My brother, I have found
The land that doth abound
With food as sweet as manna.
The more I eat, I find
The more I am inclined
To shout and sing hosanna ! "

"Shoo! shoo! shoo!" he said, observing certain long-legged, half-grown chickens, who were surreptitiously taking advantage of his devotional engrossments to rush past him into the kitchen.

"'Pears like dese yer chickens never will larn nothing!" said Tiff, finding that his vigorous "shooing" only scared the whole flock in, instead of admonishing them out. So Tiff had to lay down his work; and his thimble rolled one way, and his cake of wax another, hiding themselves under the leaves; while the hens, seeing Tiff at the door, instead of accepting his polite invitation to walk out, acted in that provoking and inconsiderate way that hens generally will, running promiscuously up and down, flapping their wings,

cackling, upsetting pots, kettles, and pans, in promiscuous ruin, Tiff each moment becoming more and more wrathful at their entire want of consideration.

"Bress me, if I ever did see any kind o' crittur so shaller as hens!" said Tiff, as, having finally ejected them, he was busy repairing the ruin they had wrought in Miss Fanny's fanciful floral arrangements, which were all lying in wild confusion. "I tought de Lord made room in every beast's head for some sense, but 'pears like hens an't got de leastest grain! Puts me out, seeing dem crawling and crawling on one leg, 'cause dey han't got sense 'nough to know whar to set down toder. Dey never has no idees what dey's going to do, from morning to night, I b'lieve! But, den, dere's folks dat's just like 'em, dat de Lord has gin brains to, and dey won't use 'em. Dey's always settin round, but dey never lays no eggs. So hens an't de wust critturs, arter all. And I rally don' know what we'd do widout 'em!" said Old Tiff, relentingly, as, appeased from his wrath, he took up at once his needle and his psalm, singing lustily, and with good courage,

"Perhaps you'll tink me wild,
And simple as a child,
But I'm a child of glory!"

"Laws, now," said Tiff, pursuing his reflections to himself, "maybe he's dead now, sure 'nough! And if he is, why, I can do for de chil'en raal powerful. I sold right smart of eggs dis yer summer, and de sweet 'tatoes allers fetches a good price. If I could only get de chil'en along wid der reading, and keep der manners handsome! Why, Miss Fanny, now, she's growing up to be raal perty. She got de raal Peyton look to her; and dere's dis yer 'bout gals and women, dat if dey's perty, why, somebody wants to be marrying of 'em; and so dey gets took care of. I tell you, dere shan't any of dem fellers dat he brings home wid him have anyting to say to her! Peyton blood an't for der money, I can tell 'em! Dem fellers allers

find 'emselves mighty onlucky as long as I's round! One ting or 'nother happens to 'em, so dat dey don't want to come no more. Drefful por times dey has!" And Tiff shook with a secret chuckle.

"But, now, yer see, dere's never any knowing! Dere may be some Peyton property coming to dese yer chil'en. I's known sich tings happen, 'fore now. Lawyers calling after de heirs; and den here dey be a'ready fetched up. I's minding dat I'd better speak to Miss Nina's man 'bout dese yer chil'en; 'cause he's a nice, perty man, and nat'rally he'd take an interest; and dat ar handsome sister of his, dat was so thick wid Miss Nina, maybe she'd be doing something for her. Any way, dese yer chil'en shall neber come to want 'long as I's above ground!"

Alas for the transitory nature of human expectations! Even our poor little Arcadia in the wilderness, where we have had so many hours of quaint delight, was destined to feel the mutability of all earthly joys and prospects. Even while Tiff spoke and sung, in the exuberance of joy and security of his soul, a disastrous phantom was looming up from a distance — the phantom of Cripps' old wagon. Cripps was not dead, as was to have been hoped, but returning for a more permanent residence, bringing with him a bride of his own heart's choosing.

Tiff's dismay — his utter, speechless astonishment — may be imagined, when the ill-favored machine rumbled up to the door, and Cripps produced from it what seemed to be, at first glance, a bundle of tawdry, dirty finery; but at last it turned out to be a woman, so far gone in intoxication as scarcely to be sensible of what she was doing. Evidently, she was one of the lowest of that class of poor whites whose wretched condition is not among the least of the evils of slavery. Whatever she might have been naturally, — what ever of beauty or of good there might have been in the womanly nature within her, — lay wholly withered and eclipsed under the force of an education churchless, schoolless, with all the vices of civilization without its refinements,

and all the vices of barbarism without the occasional nobility by which they are sometimes redeemed. A low and vicious connection with this woman had at last terminated in marriage — such marriages as one shudders to think of, where gross animal natures come together, without even a glimmering idea of the higher purposes of that holy relation.

“Tiff, this yer is your new mistress,” said Cripps, with an idiotic laugh. “Plaguy nice girl, too! I thought I’d bring the children a mother to take care of them. Come along, girl!”

Looking closer, we recognize in the woman our old acquaintance, Polly Skinflint.

He pulled her forward; and she, coming in, seated herself on Fanny’s bed. Tiff looked as if he could have struck her dead. An avalanche had fallen upon him. He stood in the door with the slack hand of utter despair; while she, swinging her heels, began leisurely spitting about her, in every direction, the juice of a quid of tobacco, which she cherished in one cheek.

“Durned if this yer an’t pretty well!” she said. “Only I want the nigger to heave out that ar trash!” pointing to Fanny’s flowers. “I don’t want children sticking no herbs round my house! Hey, you nigger, heave out that trash!”

As Tiff stood still, not obeying this call, the woman appeared angry; and, coming up to him, struck him on the side of the head.

“O, come, come, Poll!” said Cripps, “you be still! He an’t used to no such ways.”

“Still!” said the amiable lady, turning round to him. “You go ’long! Did n’t you tell me, if I married you, I should have a nigger to order round, just as I pleased?”

“Well, well,” said Cripps, who was not by any means a cruelly-disposed man, “I did n’t think you’d want to go walloping him, the first thing.”

“I will, if he don’t shin round,” said the virago, “and you, too!”

And this vigorous profession was further carried out by a

vigorous shove, which reacted in Cripps in the form of a cuff, and in a few moments the disgraceful scuffle was at its full height. And Tiff turned in disgust and horror from the house.

"O, good Lord!" he said to himself; "we does n't know what's 'fore us! And I's feeling so bad when de Lord took my por little man, and now I's ready to go down on my knees to thank de Lord dat he's took him away from de evil to come! To think of my por sweet lamb, Miss Fanny, as I's been bringing up so carful! Lord, dis yer's a heap worse dan de cholera!"

It was with great affliction and dismay that he saw the children coming forward in high spirits, bearing between them a basket of wild-grapes, which they had been gathering. He ran out to meet them.

"Laws, yer por lambs," he said, "yer does n't know what's a coming on you! Yer pa's gone and married a drefful low white woman, sich as an't fit for no Christian children to speak to. And now dey's quar'ling and fighting in dere, like two heathens! And Miss Nina's dead, and dere an't no place for you to go!"

And the old man sat down and actually wept aloud, while the children, frightened, got into his arms, and nestled close to him for protection, crying too.

"What shall we do? what shall we do?" said Fanny. And Teddy, who always repeated, reverentially, all his sister's words, said, after her, in a deplorable whimper, "What shall we do?"

"I's a good mind to go off wid you in de wilderness, like de chil'en of Israel," said Tiff, "though dere an't no manna falling nowadays."

"Tiff, does marrying father make her our ma?" said Fanny.

"No 'deed, Miss Fanny, it does n't! Yer ma was one o' de fustest old Virginny families. It was jist throwing herself 'way, marrying him! I neber said dat ar 'fore, 'cause it wan't 'spectful. But I don't care now!"

At this moment Cripps' voice was heard shouting :

"Hallo, you Tiff! Where is the durned nigger? I say, come back! Poll and I's made it up, now! Bring 'long them children, and let them get acquainted with their mammy," he said, laying hold of Fanny's hand, and drawing her, frightened and crying, towards the house.

"Don't you be afraid, child," said Cripps; "I've brought you a new ma."

"We didn't want any new ma!" said Teddy, in a dolorous voice.

"O, yes, you do," said Cripps, coaxing him. "Come along, my little man! There's your mammy," he said, pushing him into the fat embrace of Polly.

"Fanny, go kiss your ma."

Fanny hung back and cried, and Teddy followed her example.

"Confound the durn young 'uns!" said the new-married lady. "I told you, Cripps, I didn't want no brats of t' other woman's! Be plague enough when I get some of my own!"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

THE once neat and happy cottage, of which Old Tiff was the guardian genius, soon experienced sad reverses. Polly Skinflint's violent and domineering temper made her absence from her father's establishment rather a matter of congratulation to Abijah. Her mother, one of those listless and inefficient women, whose lives flow in a calm, muddy current of stupidity and laziness, talked very little about it; but, on the whole, was perhaps better contented to be out of the range of Polly's sharp voice and long arms. It was something of a consideration, in Abijah's shrewd view of things, that Cripps owned a nigger—the first point to which the aspiration of the poor white of the South generally tends. Polly, whose love of power was a predominant element in her nature, resolutely declared, in advance, she'd make him shin round, or she'd know the reason why. As to the children, she regarded them as the encumbrances of the estate, to be got over with in the best way possible; for, as she graphically remarked, "Every durned young 'un had to look out when she was 'bout!"

The bride had been endowed with a marriage-portion, by her father, of half a barrel of whiskey; and it was announced that Cripps was tired of trading round the country, and meant to set up trading at home. In short, the little cabin became a low grog-shop, a resort of the most miserable and vicious portion of the community. The violent temper of Polly soon drove Cripps upon his travels again, and his children were left unprotected to the fury of

their step-mother's temper. Every vestige of whatever was decent about the house and garden was soon swept away ; for the customers of the shop, in a grand Sunday drinking-bout, amused themselves with tearing down even the prairie-rose and climbing-vine that once gave a sylvan charm to the rude dwelling. Polly's course, in the absence of her husband, was one of gross, unblushing licentiousness ; and the ears and eyes of the children were shocked with language and scenes too bad for repetition.

Old Tiff was almost heart-broken. He could have borne the beatings and starvings which came on himself ; but the abuse which came on the children he could not bear. One night, when the drunken orgie was raging within the house, Tiff gathered courage from despair.

“ Miss Fanny,” he said, “ jist go in de garret, and make a bundle o' sich tings as dere is, and throw 'em out o' de winder. I's been a praying night and day ; and de Lord says *He'll* open some way or oder' for us ! I'll keep Teddy out here under de trees, while you jist bundles up what por clothes is left, and throws 'em out o' de winder.”

Silently as a ray of moonlight, the fair, delicate-looking child glided through the room where her step-mother and two or three drunken men were revelling in a loathsome debauch.

“ Halloa, sis ! ” cried one of the men, after her, “ where are you going to ? Stop here, and give me a kiss ! ”

The unutterable look of mingled pride, and fear, and angry distress, which the child cast, as, quick as thought, she turned from them and ran up the ladder into the loft, occasioned roars of laughter.

“ I say, Bill, why did n't you catch her ? ” said one.

“ O, no matter for that,” said another ; “ she'll come of her own accord, one of these days.”

Fanny's heart beat like a frightened bird, as she made up her little bundle. Then, throwing it to Tiff, who was below in the dark, she called out, in a low, earnest whisper ;

"Tiff, put up that board, and I'll climb down on it. I won't go back among those dreadful men!"

Carefully and noiselessly as possible, Tiff lifted a long, rough slab, and placed it against the side of the house. Carefully Fanny set her feet on the top of it, and, spreading her arms, came down, like a little puff of vapor, into the arms of her faithful attendant.

"Bress de Lord! Here we is, all right," said Tiff.

"O, Tiff, I'm so glad!" said Teddy, holding fast to the skirt of Tiff's apron, and jumping for joy.

"Yes," said Tiff, "all right. Now de angel of de Lord'll go with us into de wilderness!"

"There's plenty of angels there, an't there?" said Teddy, victoriously, as he lifted the little bundle, with undoubting faith.

"Laws, yes!" said Tiff. "I don' know why dere should n't be in our days. Any rate, de Lord 'peared to me in a dream, and sâys he, 'Tiff, rise and take de chil'en and go in de land of Egypt, and be dere till de time I tell dee.' Dem is de bery words. And 't was 'tween de cock-crow and daylight dey come to me, when I'd been lying dar praying, like a hail-storm, all night, not gibing de Lord no rest! Says I to him, says I, 'Lord, I don' know nothing what to do; and now, ef you was por as I be, and I was great king, like you, I'd help you! And now, Lord,' says I, 'you *must* help us, 'cause we an't got no place else to go; 'cause, you know, Miss Nina she's dead, and Mr. John Gordon, too! And dis yer woman will ruin dese yer chil'en, ef you don't help us! And now I hope you won't be angry! But I has to be very bold, 'cause tings have got so dat we can't bar 'em no longer!' Den, yer see, I dropped 'sleep; and I had n't no more 'n got to sleep, jist after cock-crow, when de voice come!"

"And is this the land of Egypt," said Teddy, "that we're going to?"

"I spect so," said Tiff. "Don't you know de story Miss Nina read to you, once, how de angel of de Lord

'peared to Hagar in de wilderness, when she was sitting down under de bush. Den dere was anoder one come to 'Lijah when he was under de juniper-tree, when he was wandering up and down, and got hungry, and woke up; and dere, sure 'nough, was a corn-cake baking for him on de coals! Don't you mind Miss Nina was reading dat ar de bery last Sunday she come to our place? Bress de Lord for sending her to us! I's got heaps o' good through dem readings."

"Do you think we really shall see any?" said Fanny, with a little shade of apprehension in her voice. "I don't know as I shall know how to speak to them."

"O, angels is pleasant-spoken, well-meaning folks, allers," said Tiff, "and don't take no 'fence at us. Of course, dey knows we an't fetched up in der ways, and dey don't spect it of us. It's my 'pinion," said Tiff, "dat when folks is honest, and does de bery best dey can, dey don't need to be 'fraid to speak to angels, nor nobody else; 'cause, you see, we speaks to de Lord hisself when we prays, and, bress de Lord, he don't take it ill of us, no ways. And now it's borne in strong on my mind, dat de Lord is going to lead us through the wilderness, and bring us to good luck. Now, you see, I's going to follow de star, like de wise men did."

While they were talking, they were making their way through dense woods in the direction of the swamp, every moment taking them deeper and deeper into the tangled brush and underwood. The children were accustomed to wander for hours through the wood; and, animated by the idea of having escaped their persecutors, followed Tiff with alacrity, as he went before them, clearing away the brambles and vines with his long arms, every once in a while wading with them across a bit of morass, or climbing his way through the branches of some uprooted tree. It was after ten o'clock at night when they started. It was now after midnight. Tiff had held on his course in the direction of the swamp, where he knew many fugitives were

concealed ; and he was not without hopes of coming upon some camp or settlement of them.

About one o'clock they emerged from the more tangled brushwood, and stood on a slight little clearing, where a grape-vine, depending in natural festoons from a sweet gum-tree, made a kind of arbor. The moon was shining very full and calm, and the little breeze fluttered the grape-leaves, casting the shadow of some on the transparent greenness of others. The dew had fallen so heavily in that moist region, that every once in a while, as a slight wind agitated the leaves, it might be heard pattering from one to another, like rain-drops. Teddy had long been complaining bitterly of fatigue. Tiff now sat down under this arbor, and took him fondly into his arms.

"Sit down, Miss Fanny. And is Tiff's brave little man got tired? Well, he shall go to sleep, dat he shall! We's got out a good bit now. I reckon dey won't find us. We's out here wid de good Lord's works, and dey won't none on 'em tell on us. So, now, hush, my por little man; shut up your eyes!" And Tiff quavered the immortal cradle-hymn,

"Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber!
Holy angels guard thy bed;
Heavenly blessings, without number,
Gently falling on thy head."

In a few moments Teddy was sound asleep, and Tiff, wrapping him in his white great-coat, laid him down at the root of a tree.

"Bress de Lord, dere an't no whiskey here!" he said, "nor no drunken critturs to wake him up. And now, Miss Fanny, por chile, your eyes is a falling. Here's dis yer old shawl I put up in de pocket of my coat. Wrap it round you, whilst I scrape up a heap of dem pine-leaves, yonder. Dem is reckoned mighty good for sleeping on, 'cause dey 's so healthy, kinder. Dar, you see, I's got a desput big heap of 'em."

"I'm tired, but I'm not sleepy," said Fanny. "But, Tiff, what are *you* going to do?"

"Do!" said Tiff, laughing, with somewhat of his old, joyous laugh. "Ho! ho! ho! I's going to sit up for to meditate — a 'sidering on de fowls of de air, and de lilies in de field, and all dem dar Miss Nina used to read 'bout."

For many weeks, Fanny's bed-chamber had been the hot, dusty loft of the cabin, with the heated roof just above her head, and the noise of bacchanalian revels below. Now she lay sunk down among the soft and fragrant pine-foliage, and looked up, watching the checkered roof of vine-leaves above her head, listening to the still patter of falling dew-drops, and the tremulous whirr and flutter of leaves. Sometimes the soft night-winds swayed the tops of the pines with a long swell of dashing murmurs, like the breaking of a tide on a distant beach. The moonlight, as it came sliding down through the checkered, leafy roof, threw fragments and gleams of light, which moved capriciously here and there over the ground, revealing now a great silvery fern-leaf, and then a tuft of white flowers, gilding spots on the branches and trunks of the trees; while every moment the deeper shadows were lighted up by the gleaming of fire-flies. The child would raise her head a while, and look on the still scene around, and then sink on her fragrant pillow in dreamy delight. Everything was so still, so calm, so pure, no wonder she was prepared to believe that the angels of the Lord were to be found in the wilderness. They who have walked in closest communion with nature have ever found that they have not departed thence. The wilderness and solitary places are still glad for them, and their presence makes the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

When Fanny and Teddy were both asleep, Old Tiff knelt down and addressed himself to his prayers; and, though he had neither prayer-book, nor cushion, nor formula, his words went right to the mark, in the best English he could

command for any occasion ; and, so near as we could collect from the sound of his words, Tiff's prayer ran as follows :

“ O, good Lord, now please do look down on dese yer chil'en. I started 'em out, as you telled me ; and now whar we is to go, and whar we is to get any breakfast, I 's sure I don' know. But, O good Lord, you has got everyting in de world in yer hands, and it's mighty easy for you to be helping on us ; and I has faith to believe dat you will. O, bressed Lord Jesus, dat was carried off into Egypt for fear of de King Herod, do, pray, look down on dese yer por chil'en, for I 's sure dat ar woman is as bad as Herod, any day. Good Lord, you 's seen how she 's been treating on 'em ; and now do pray open a way for us through de wilderness to de promised land. Everlasting — Amen.”

The last two words Tiff always added to his prayers, from a sort of sense of propriety, feeling as if they rounded off the prayer, and made it, as he would have phrased it, more like a white prayer. We have only to say, to those who question concerning this manner of prayer, that, if they will examine the supplications of patriarchs of ancient times, they will find that, with the exception of the broken English and bad grammar, they were in substance very much like this of Tiff.

The Bible divides men into two classes : those who trust in themselves, and those who trust in God. The one class walk by their own light, trust in their own strength, fight their own battles, and have no confidence otherwise. The other, not neglecting to use the wisdom and strength which God has given them, still trust in his wisdom and his strength to carry out the weakness of theirs. The one class go through life as orphans ; the other have a Father.

Tiff's prayer had at least this recommendation, that he felt perfectly sure that something was to come of it. Had he not told the Lord all about it ? Certainly he had ; and of course he would be helped. And this confidence Tiff took, as Jacob did a stone, for his pillow, as he lay down between his children and slept soundly.

How innocent, soft, and kind, are all God's works! From the silent shadows of the forest the tender and loving presence which our sin exiled from the haunts of men hath not yet departed. Sweet fall the moonbeams through the dewy leaves; peaceful is the breeze that waves the branches of the pines; merciful and tender the little wind that shakes the small flowers and tremulous wood-grasses fluttering over the heads of the motherless children. O, thou who bearest in thee a heart hot and weary, sick and faint with the vain tumults and confusions of the haunts of men, go to the wilderness, and thou shalt find *Him* there who saith, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you. I will be as the dew to Israel. He shall grow as a lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."

Well, they slept there quietly, all night long. Between three and four o'clock, an oriole, who had his habitation in the vine above their heads, began a gentle twittering conversation with some of his neighbors; not a loud song, I would give you to understand, but a little, low inquiry as to what o'clock it was. And then, if you had been in a still room at that time, you might have heard, through all the trees of pine, beech, holly, sweet-gum, and larch, a little, tremulous stir and flutter of birds awaking and stretching their wings. Little eyes were opening in a thousand climbing vines, where soft, feathery habitants had hung, swinging breezily, all night. Low twitterings and chirpings were heard; then a loud, clear, echoing chorus of harmony answering from tree to tree, jubilant and joyous as if there never had been a morning before. The morning star had not yet gone down, nor were the purple curtains of the east undrawn; and the moon, which had been shining full all night, still stood like a patient, late-burning light in a quiet chamber. It is not everybody that wakes to hear this first chorus of the birds. They who sleep till sunrise have lost it, and with it a thousand mysterious pleasures, — strange, sweet communings, — which, like morning dew, begin to evaporate when the sun rises.

But, though Tiff and the children slept all night, we are under no obligations to keep our eyes shut to the fact that between three and four o'clock there came crackling through the swamps the dark figure of one whose journeyings were more often by night than by day. Dred had been out on one of his nightly excursions, carrying game, which he disposed of for powder and shot at one of the low stores we have alluded to. He came unexpectedly on the sleepers, while making his way back. His first movement, on seeing them, was that of surprise ; then, stooping and examining the group more closely, he appeared to recognize them. Dred had known Old Tiff before ; and had occasion to go to him more than once to beg supplies for fugitives in the swamps, or to get some errand performed which he could not himself venture abroad to attend to. Like others of his race, Tiff, on all such subjects, was so habitually and unfathomably secret, that the children, who knew him most intimately, had never received even a suggestion from him of the existence of any such person.

Dred, whose eyes, sharpened by habitual caution, never lost sight of any change in his vicinity, had been observant of that which had taken place in Old Tiff's affairs. When, therefore, he saw him sleeping as we have described, he understood the whole matter at once. He looked at the children, as they lay nestled at the roots of the tree, with something of a softened expression, muttering to himself, "They embrace the Rock for shelter."

He opened a pouch which he wore on his side, and took from thence one or two corn-dodgers and half a broiled rabbit, which his wife had put up for hunting provision, the day before ; and, laying them down on the leaves, hastened on to a place where he had intended to surprise some game in the morning.

The chorus of birds we have before described awakened Old Tiff, accustomed to habits of early rising. He sat up, and began rubbing his eyes and stretching himself. He

had slept well, for his habits of life had not been such as to make him at all fastidious with regard to his couch.

"Well," he said to himself, "any way, dat ar woman won't get dese yer chil'en, dis yer day!" And he gave one of his old hearty laughs, to think how nicely he had outwitted her.

"Laws," he said to himself, "don't I hear her now! 'Tiff! Tiff! Tiff!' she says. Holla away, old mist'! Tiff don't hear yer! no, nor de chil'en eider, por blessed lambs!"

Here, in turning to the children, his eye fell on the provisions. At first he stood petrified, with his hands lifted in astonishment. Had the angel been there? Sure enough, he thought.

"Well, now, bress de Lord, sure 'nough, here's de bery breakfast I's asking for last night! Well, I knowed de Lord would do something for us; but I really didn't know as 't would come so quick! May be ravens brought it, as dey did to 'Lijah—bread and flesh in de morning, and bread and flesh at night. Well, dis yer's 'couraging—'t is so. I won't wake up de por little lambs. Let 'em sleep. Dey'll be mighty tickled when dey comes fur to see de breakfast; and, den, out here it's so sweet and clean! None yer nasty 'bacca-spittins of folks dat does n't know how to be decent. Bress me, I's rather tired, myself. I spects I'd better camp down again, till de chil'en wakes. Dat ar crittur's kep me gwine till I's got pretty stiff, wid her contrary ways. Spect she'll be as troubled as King Herod was, and all 'Rusalem wid her!"

And Tiff rolled and laughed quietly, in the security of his heart.

"I say, Tiff, where are we?" said a little voice at his side.

"Whar is we, puppit?" said Tiff, turning over; "why, bress yer sweet eyes, how does yer do, dis mornin? Stretch away, my man! Neber be 'fraid; we's in de Lord's diggins now, all safe. And de angel's got a breakfast ready

for us, too!" said Tiff, displaying the provision, which he had arranged on some vine-leaves.

"O, Uncle Tiff, did the angels bring that?" said Teddy. "Why did n't you wake me up? I wanted to see them. I never saw an angel, in all my life!"

"Nor I neider, honey. Dey comes mostly when we's 'sleep. But, stay, dere's Miss Fanny, a waking up. How is ye, lamb? Is ye 'freshed?"

"O, Uncle Tiff, I've slept so sound," said Fanny; "and I dreamed such a beautiful dream!"

"Well, den, tell it right off, 'fore breakfast," said Tiff, "to make it come true."

"Well," said Fanny, "I dreamed I was in a desolate place, where I could n't get out, all full of rocks and brambles, and Teddy was with me; and while we were trying and trying, our ma came to us. She looked like our ma, only a great deal more beautiful; and she had a strange white dress on, that shone, and hung clear to her feet; and she took hold of our hands, and the rocks opened, and we walked through a path into a beautiful green meadow, full of lilies and wild strawberries; and then she was gone."

"Well," said Teddy, "maybe 't was she who brought some breakfast to us. See here, what we've got!"

Fanny looked surprised and pleased, but, after some consideration, said,

"I don't believe mamma brought that. I don't believe they have corn-cake and roast meat in heaven. If it had been manna, now, it would have been more likely."

"Neber mind whar it comes from," said Tiff. "It's right good, and we bress de Lord for it."

And they sat down accordingly, and ate their breakfast with a good heart.

"Now," said Tiff, "somewhar roun' in dis yer swamp dere's a camp o' de colored people; but I don' know rightly whar 't is. If we could get dar, we could stay dar a while, till something or nuder should turn up. Hark! what's dat ar?"

'T was the crack of a rifle reverberating through the dewy, leafy stillness of the forest.

"Dat ar an't fur-off," said Tiff.

The children looked a little terrified.

"Don't you be 'fraid," he said. "I would n't wonder but I knowed who dat ar was. Hark, now! 't is somebody coming dis yer way."

A clear, exultant voice sung, through the leafy distance,

"O, had I the wings of the morning,
I'd fly away to Canaan's shore."

"Yes," said Tiff, to himself, "dat ar 's his voice. Now, chil'en," he said, "dar's somebody coming; and you must n't be 'fraid on him, 'cause I spects he 'll get us to dat ar camp I 's telling 'bout."

And Tiff, in a cracked and strained voice, which contrasted oddly enough with the bell-like tones of the distant singer, commenced singing a part of an old song, which might, perhaps, have been used as a signal:

"Hailing so stormily,
Cold, stormy wedder;
I want my true love all de day.
Whar shall I find him? whar shall I find him?"

The distant singer stopped his song, apparently to listen, and, while Tiff kept on singing, they could hear the crackling of approaching footsteps. At last Dred emerged to view.

"So you 've fled to the wilderness?" he said.

"Yes, yes," said Tiff, with a kind of giggle, "we had to come to it, dat ar woman was so aggravating on de chil'en. Of all de pizin critturs dat I knows on, dese yer mean white women is de pizinest! Dey an't got no manners, and no bringing up. Dey does n't begin to know how tings ought fur to be done 'mong 'specable people. So we just tuck to de bush."

"You might have taken to a worse place," said Dred.
"The Lord God giveth grace and glory to the trees of the

wood. And the time will come when the Lord will make a covenant of peace, and cause the evil beast to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and shall sleep in the woods; and the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and they shall be safe in the land, when the Lord hath broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hands of those that serve themselves of them."

"And you tink dem good times coming, sure 'nough?" said Tiff.

"The Lord hath said it," said the other. "But first the day of vengeance must come."

"I don't want no sich," said Tiff. "I want to live peaceable."

Dred looked upon Tiff with an air of acquiescent pity, which had in it a slight shade of contempt, and said, as if in soliloquy,

"Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens; and he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant, and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute."

"As to rest," said Tiff, "de Lord knows I an't had much of dat ar, if I be an ass. If I had a good, strong pack-saddle, I'd like to trot dese yer chil'en out in some good cleared place."

"Well," said Dred, "you have served him that was ready to perish, and not bewrayed him who wandered; therefore the Lord will open for you a fenced city in the wilderness."

"Jest so," said Tiff; "dat ar camp o' yourn is jest what I's arter. I's willin' to lend a hand to most anyting dat's good."

"Well," said Dred, "the children are too tender to walk where we must go. We must bear them as an eagle beareth her young. Come, my little man!"

And, as Dred spoke, he stooped down and stretched out his hands to Teddy. His severe and gloomy counte-

nance relaxed into a smile, and, to Tiff's surprise, the child went immediately to him, and allowed him to lift him in his arms.

"Now, I'd tought he'd been skeered o' you!" said Tiff.

"Not he! I never saw child or dog that I could n't make come to me. Hold fast, now, my little man!" he said, seating the boy on his shoulder. "Trees have long arms; don't let them rake you off. Now, Tiff," he said, "you take the girl and come after, and when we come into the thick of the swamp, mind you step right in my tracks. Mind you don't set your foot on a tussock if I have n't set mine there before you; because the moccasons lie on the tussocks."

And thus saying, Dred and his companion began making their way towards the fugitive camp.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CLERICAL CONFERENCE.

A FEW days found Clayton in the city of —, guest of the Rev. Dr. Cushing. He was a man in middle life; of fine personal presence, urbane, courtly, gentlemanly. Dr. Cushing was a popular and much-admired clergyman, standing high among his brethren in the ministry, and almost the idol of a large and flourishing church. A man of warm feelings, humane impulses, and fine social qualities, his sermons, beautifully written, and delivered with great fervor, often drew tears from the eyes of the hearers. His pastoral ministrations, whether at wedding or funeral, had a peculiar tenderness and unction. None was more capable than he of celebrating the holy fervor and self-denying sufferings of apostles and martyrs; none more easily kindled by those devout hymns which describe the patience of the saints; but, with all this, for any practical emergency, Dr. Cushing was nothing of a soldier. There was a species of moral effeminacy about him, and the very luxuriant softness and richness of his nature unfitted him to endure hardness. He was known, in all his intercourse with his brethren, as a peace-maker, a modifier, and harmonizer. Nor did he scrupulously examine how much of the credit of this was due to a fastidious softness of nature, which made controversy disagreeable and wearisome. Nevertheless, Clayton was at first charmed with the sympathetic warmth with which he and his plans were received by his relative. He seemed perfectly to agree with Clayton in all his views of the terrible evils of the slave system, and was prompt with

anecdotes and instances to enforce everything that he said. "Clayton was just in time," he said; "a number of his ministerial brethren were coming to-morrow, some of them from the northern states. Clayton should present his views to them."

Dr. Cushing's establishment was conducted on the footing of the most liberal hospitality; and that very evening the domestic circle was made larger by the addition of four or five ministerial brethren. Among these Clayton was glad to meet, once more, father Dickson. The serene, good man, seemed to bring the blessing of the gospel of peace with him wherever he went.

Among others, was one whom we will more particularly introduce, as the Rev. Shubael Packthread. Dr. Shubael Packthread was a minister of a leading church, in one of the northern cities. Constitutionally, he was an amiable and kindly man, with very fair natural abilities, fairly improved by culture. Long habits, however, of theological and ecclesiastical controversy had cultivated a certain species of acuteness of mind into such disproportioned activity, that other parts of his intellectual and moral nature had been dwarfed and dwindled beside it. What might, under other circumstances, have been agreeable and useful tact, became in him a constant and life-long *habit* of stratagem. While other people look upon words as vehicles for conveying ideas, Dr. Packthread regarded them only as mediums for concealment. His constant study, on every controverted topic, was so to adjust language that, with the appearance of the utmost precision, it should always be capable of a double interpretation. He was a cunning master of all forms of indirection; of all phrases by which people *appear* to say what they do not say, and *not* to say what they *do* say.

He was an adept also in all the mechanism of ecclesiastical debate, of the intricate labyrinths of heresy-hunting, of every scheme by which more simple and less advised brethren, speaking with ignorant sincerity, could be entrapped

and deceived. He was *au fait* also in all compromise measures, in which two parties unite in one form of words, meaning by them exactly opposite ideas, and call the agreement a *union*. He was also expert in all those parliamentary modes, in synod or general assembly, by which troublesome discussions could be avoided or disposed of, and credulous brethren made to believe they had gained points which they had not gained; by which discussions could be at will blinded with dusty clouds of misrepresentation, or trailed on through interminable marshes of weariness, to accomplish some manœuvre of ecclesiastical tactics.

Dr. Packthread also was master of every means by which the influence of opposing parties might be broken. He could spread a convenient report on necessary occasions, by any of those forms which do not assert, but which disseminate a slander quite as certainly as if they did. If it was necessary to create a suspicion of the orthodoxy, or of the piety, or even of the morality, of an opposing brother, Dr. Packthread understood how to do it in the neatest and most tasteful manner. He was an infallible judge whether it should be accomplished by innocent interrogations, as to whether you had heard "so and so of Mr. —;" or, by "charitably expressed hopes that you had not heard so and so;" or, by gentle suggestions, whether it would not be as well to inquire; or, by shakes of the head, and lifts of the eyes, at proper intervals in conversation; or, lastly, by *silence* when silence became the strongest as well as safest form of assertion.

In person, he was rather tall, thin, and the lines of his face appeared, every one of them, to be engraved by caution and care. In his boyhood and youth, the man had had a trick of smiling and laughing without considering why; the grace of prudence, however, had corrected all this. He never did either, in these days, without understanding precisely what he was about. His face was a part of his stock in trade, and he understood the management of it remarkably well. He knew precisely all the gradations of smile

which were useful for accomplishing different purposes. The solemn smile, the smile of inquiry, the smile affirmative, the smile suggestive, the smile of incredulity, and the smile of innocent credulity, which encouraged the simple-hearted narrator to go on unfolding himself to the brother, who sat quietly behind his face, as a spider does behind his web, waiting till his unsuspecting friend had tangled himself in incautious, impulsive, and of course contradictory meshes of statement, which were, in some future hour, in the most gentle and Christian spirit, to be tightened around the incautious captive, while as much blood was sucked as the good of the cause demanded.

It is not to be supposed that the Rev. Dr. Packthread, so skilful and adroit as we have represented him, failed in the necessary climax of such skill — that of deceiving himself. Far from it. Truly and honestly Dr. Packthread thought himself one of the hundred and forty and four thousand, who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, in whose mouth is found no guile. *Prudence* he considered the chief of Christian graces. He worshipped Christian prudence, and the whole category of accomplishments which we have described he considered as the fruits of it. His prudence, in fact, served him all the purposes that the stock of the tree did to the ancient idolater. “With part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied; yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image; he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god.”

No doubt, Dr. Packthread expected to enter heaven by the same judicious arrangement by which he had lived on earth; and so he went on, from year to year, doing deeds which even a political candidate would blush at; violating the most ordinary principles of morality and honor; while he sung hymns, made prayers, and administered sacra-

ments, expecting, no doubt, at last to enter heaven by some neat arrangement of words used in two senses.

Dr. Packthread's cautious agreeableness of manner formed a striking contrast to the innocent and almost child-like simplicity with which father Dickson, in his threadbare coat, appeared at his side. Almost as poor in this world's goods as his Master, father Dickson's dwelling had been a simple one-story cottage, in all, save thrift and neatness, very little better than those of the poorest; and it was a rare year when a hundred dollars passed through his hands. He had seen the time when he had not even wherewithal to take from the office a necessary letter. He had seen his wife suffer for medicine and comforts, in sickness. He had himself ridden without overcoat through the chill months of winter; but all these things he had borne as the traveller bears a storm on the way to his home; and it was beautiful to see the unenvying, frank, simple pleasure which he seemed to feel in the elegant and abundant home of his brother, and in the thousand appliances of hospitable comfort by which he was surrounded. The spirit within us that lusteth to envy had been chased from his bosom by the expulsive force of a higher love; and his simple and unstudied acts of constant good-will showed that simple Christianity can make the gentleman. Father Dickson was regarded by his ministerial brethren with great affection and veneration, though wholly devoid of any ecclesiastical wisdom. They were fond of using him much as they did their hymn-books and testaments, for their better hours of devotion; and equally apt to let slip his admonitions, when they came to the hard, matter-of-fact business of ecclesiastical discussion and management; yet they loved well to have him with them, as they felt that, like a psalm or a text, his presence in some sort gave sanction to what they did.

In due time there was added to the number of the circle our joyous, out-spoken friend, father Bonnie, fresh from a recent series of camp-meetings in a distant part of the state, and ready at a minute's notice for either a laugh or a prayer.

Very little of the stereotype print of his profession had he ; the sort of wild woodland freedom of his life giving to his manners and conversation a tone of sylvan roughness, of which Dr. Packthread evidently stood in considerable doubt. Father Bonnie's early training had been that of what is called, in common parlance, a "self-made man." He was unsophisticated by Greek or Latin, and had rather a contempt for the forms of the schools, and a joyous determination to say what he pleased on all occasions. There were also present one or two of the leading Presbyterian ministers of the North. They had, in fact, come for a private and confidential conversation with Dr. Cushing concerning the reünion of the New School Presbyterian Church with the Old.

It may be necessary to apprise some of our readers, not conversant with American ecclesiastical history, that the Presbyterian church of America is divided into two parties in relation to certain theological points, and that the adherents on either side call themselves *old* or *new* school. Some years since, these two parties divided, and each of them organized its own general assembly.

It so happened that all the slaveholding interest, with some very inconsiderable exceptions, went into the old school body. The great majority of the new school body were avowedly anti-slavery men, according to a solemn declaration, which committed the whole Presbyterian church to those sentiments, in the year eighteen hundred and eighteen. And the breach between the two sections was caused quite as much by the difference of feeling between the northern and southern branches on the subject of slavery, as by any differences of doctrine.

After the first jar of separation was over, thoughts of reünion began to arise on both sides, and to be quietly discussed among leading minds.

There is a power in men of a certain class of making an organization of any kind, whether it be political or ecclesiastical, an object of absorbing and individual devotion. Most men feel empty and insufficient of themselves, and

find a need to ballast their own insufficiency by attaching themselves to something of more weight than they are. They put their stock of being out at interest, and invest themselves somewhere and in something; and the love of wife or child is not more absorbing than the love of the bank where the man has invested himself. It is true, this power is a noble one; because thus a man may pass out of self, and choose God, the great good of all, for his portion. But human weakness falls below this; and, as the idolater worships the infinite and unseen under a visible symbol till it effaces the memory of what is signified, so men begin by loving institutions for God's sake, which come at last to stand with them in the place of God.

Such was the Rev. Dr. Calker. He was a man of powerful though narrow mind, of great energy and efficiency, and of that capability of abstract devotion which makes the soldier or the statesman. He was earnestly and sincerely devout, as he understood devotion. He began with loving the church for God's sake, and ended with loving her better than God. And, by the church, he meant the organization of the Presbyterian church in the United States of America. Her cause, in his eyes, was God's cause; her glory, God's glory; her success, the indispensable condition of the millennium; her defeat, the defeat of all that was good for the human race. His devotion to her was honest and unselfish.

Of course Dr. Calker estimated all interests by their influence on the Presbyterian church. He weighed every cause in the balance of her sanctuary. What promised extension and power to her, *that* he supported. What threatened defeat or impediment, *that* he was ready to sacrifice. He would, at any day, sacrifice himself and all his interests to that cause, and he felt equally willing to sacrifice others and their interests. The anti-slavery cause he regarded with a simple eye to this question. It was a disturbing force, weakening the harmony among brethren, threatening disruption and disunion. He regarded it, therefore, with distrust and aversion.

He would read no facts on that side of the question. And when the discussions of zealous brethren would bring frightful and appalling statements into the general assembly, he was too busy in seeking what could be said to ward off their force, to allow them to have much influence on his own mind. Gradually he came to view the whole subject with dislike, as a pertinacious intruder in the path of the Presbyterian church. That the whole train of cars, laden with the interests of the world for all time, should be stopped by a ragged, manacled slave across the track, was to him an impertinence and absurdity. What was he, that the Presbyterian church should be divided and hindered for him? So thought the exultant thousands who followed Christ, once, when the blind beggar raised his importunate clamor, and they bade him hold his peace. So thought not HE, who stopped the tide of triumphant success, that he might call the neglected one to himself, and lay his hands upon him.

Dr. Calker had from year to year opposed the agitation of the slavery question in the general assembly of the Presbyterian church, knowing well that it threatened disunion. When, in spite of all his efforts, disunion came, he bent his energies to the task of reuniting; and he was the most important character in the present caucus.

Of course a layman, and a young man also, would feel some natural hesitancy in joining at once in the conversation of those older than himself. Clayton, therefore, sat at the hospitable breakfast-table of Dr. Cushing rather as an auditor than as a speaker.

"Now, brother Cushing," said Dr. Calker, "the fact is, there never was any need of this disruption. It has crippled the power of the church, and given the enemy occasion to speak reproachfully. Our divisions are playing right into the hands of the Methodists and Baptists; and ground that we might hold, united, is going into their hands every year."

"I know it," said Dr. Cushing, "and we Southern
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brethren mourn over it, I assure you. The fact is, brother Calker, there's no such doctrinal division, after all. Why, there are brethren among us that are as new school as Dr. Draper, and we don't meddle with them."

"Just so," replied Dr. Calker; "and we have true-blue old school men among us."

"I think," said Dr. Packthread, "that, with suitable care, a document might be drawn up which will meet the views on both sides. You see, we must get the extreme men on both sides to agree to hold still. Why, now, I am called new school; but I wrote a set of definitions once, which I showed to Dr. Pyke, who is as sharp as anybody on the other side, and he said, 'He agreed with them entirely.' Those N—— H—— men are incautious."

"Yes," said Dr. Calker, "and it's just dividing the resources and the influence of the church for nothing. Now, those discussions as to the time when moral agency begins are, after all, of no great account in practical workings."

"Well," said Dr. Cushing, "it's, after all, nothing but the radical tone of some of your abolition fanatics that stands in the way. These slavery discussions in general assembly have been very disagreeable and painful to our people, particularly those of the Western brethren. They don't understand us, nor the delicacy of our position. They don't know that we need to be let alone in order to effect anything. Now, I am for trusting to the softening, meliorating influences of the Gospel. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. I trust that, in his mysterious providence, the Lord will see fit, in his own good time, to remove this evil of slavery. Meanwhile, brethren ought to possess their souls in patience."

"Brother Cushing," said father Dickson, "since the assembly of eighteen hundred and eighteen, the number of slaves has increased in this country four-fold. New slave states have been added, and a great, regular system of breeding and trading organized, which is filling all our large cities with trading-houses. The ships of our ports go out

as slavers, carrying loads of miserable creatures down to New Orleans ; and there is a constant increase of this traffic through the country. This very summer I was at the death-bed of a poor girl, only seventeen or eighteen, who had been torn from all her friends and sent off with a coffin ; and she died there in the wilderness. It does seem to me, brother Cushing, that this silent plan does not answer. We are not half as near to emancipation, apparently, as we were in eighteen hundred and eighteen."

"Has there ever been any attempt," said Clayton, "among the Christians of your denominations, to put a stop to this internal slave-trade?"

"Well," said Dr. Cushing, "I don't know that there has, any further than general preaching against injustice."

"Have you ever made any movement in the church to prevent the separation of families?" said Clayton.

"No, not exactly. We leave that thing to the conscience of individuals. The synods have always enjoined it on professors of religion to treat their servants according to the spirit of the Gospel."

"Has the church ever endeavored to influence the legislature to allow general education?" said Clayton.

"No ; that subject is fraught with difficulties," said Dr. Cushing. "The fact is, if these rabid Northern abolitionists would let us alone, we might, perhaps, make a movement on some of these subjects. But they excite the minds of our people, and get them into such a state of inflammation, that we cannot do anything."

During all the time that father Dickson and Clayton had been speaking, Dr. Calker had been making minutes with a pencil on a small piece of paper, for future use. It was always disagreeable to him to hear of slave-coffins and the internal slave-trade ; and, therefore, when anything was ever said on these topics, he would generally employ himself in some other way than listening. Father Dickson he had known of old as being remarkably pertinacious on those subjects ; and, therefore, when he began to speak, he

took the opportunity of jotting down a few ideas for a future exigency. He now looked up from his paper, and spoke :

“O, those fellows are without any reason — perfectly wild and crazy ! They are monomaniacs ! They cannot see but one subject anywhere. Now, there ’s father Ruskin, of Ohio — there ’s nothing can be done with that man ! I have had him at my house hours and hours, talking to him, and laying it all down before him, and showing him what great interests he was compromising. But it did n’t do a bit of good. He just harps on one eternal string. Now, it ’s all the pushing and driving of these fellows in the general assembly that made the division, in my opinion.”

“We kept it off a good many years,” said Dr. Packthread ; “and it took all our ingenuity to do it, I assure you. Now, ever since eighteen hundred and thirty-five, these fellows have been pushing and crowding in every assembly ; and we have stood faithfully in our lot, to keep the assembly from doing anything which could give offence to our Southern brethren. We have always been particular to put them forward in our public services, and to show them every imaginable deference. I think our brethren ought to consider how hard we have worked. We had to be instant in season and out of season, I can tell you. I think I may claim some little merit,” continued the doctor, with a cautious smile spreading over his face ; “if I have any talent, it is a capacity in the judicious use of language. Now, sometimes brethren will wrangle a whole day, till they all get tired and sick of a subject ; and then just let a man who understands the use of terms step in, and sometimes, by omitting a single word, he will alter the whole face of an affair. I remember one year those fellows were driving us up to make some sort of declaration about slavery. And we really had to do it, because it would n’t do to have the whole West split off ; and there was a three days’ fight, till finally we got the thing pared down to the lowest terms. We thought we would pass a resolution that slavery was a *moral evil*, if the Southern brethren like that better than

the old way of calling it a sin, and we really were getting on quite harmoniously, when some of the Southern ultras took it up; and they said that moral evil meant the same as sin, and that would imply a censure on the brethren. Well, it got late, and some of the hottest ones were tired and had gone off; and I just quietly drew my pen across the word *moral*, and read the resolution, and it went unanimously. Most ministers, you see, are willing to call slavery an *evil* — the trouble lay in that word *moral*. Well, that capped the crater for that year. But, then, they were at it again the very next time they came together, for those fellows never sleep. Well, then we took a new turn. I told the brethren we had better get it on to the ground of the reserved rights of presbyteries and synods, and decline interfering. Well, then, that was going very well, but some of the brethren very injudiciously got up a resolution in the assembly recommending disciplinary measures for dancing. That was passed without much thought, because, you know, there's no great interest involved in dancing, and, of course, there's nobody to oppose such a resolution; but, then, it was very injudicious, under the circumstances; for the abolitionists made a handle of it immediately, and wanted to know why we could n't as well recommend a discipline for slavery; because, you see, dancing is n't a sin, *per se*, any more than slavery is; and they have n't done blowing their trumpets over us to this day."

Here the company rose from breakfast, and, according to the good old devout custom, seated themselves for family worship. Two decent, well-dressed black women were called in, and also a negro man. At father Dickson's request, all united in singing the following hymn:

" Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb;
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?
Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,

While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas ?
Sure I must fight if I would reign ;
Increase my courage, Lord !
I 'll bear the cross, endure the shame,
Supported by thy word.
The saints, in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer, though they die ;
They see the victory from afar,
With faith's discerning eye.
When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thine armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine."

Anybody who had seen the fervor with which these brethren now united in singing these stanzas, might have supposed them a company of the primitive martyrs and confessors, who, having drawn the sword and thrown away the scabbard, were now ready for a millennial charge on the devil and all his works. None sung with more heartiness than Dr. Packthread, for his natural feelings were quick and easily excited ; nor did he dream he was not a soldier of the cross, and that the species of skirmishes he had been describing were not all in accordance with the spirit of the hymn. Had you interrogated him, he would have shown you a syllogistic connection between the glory of God and the best good of the universe, and the course he had been pursuing. So that, if father Dickson had supposed the hymn would act as a gentle suggestion, he was very much mistaken. As to Dr. Calker, he joined, with enthusiasm, applying it all the while to the enemies of the Presbyterian church, in the same manner as Ignatius Loyola might have sung it, applying it to Protestantism. Dr. Cushing considered the conflict described as wholly an internal one, and thus all joined alike in swelling the chorus :

" A soldier for Jesus, hallelujah !
Love and serve the Lord."

Father Dickson read from the Bible as follows :

“ Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our consciences, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have our conversation in the world.”

Father Dickson had many gentle and quiet ways, peculiar to himself, of suggesting his own views to his brethren. Therefore, having read these verses, he paused, and asked Dr. Packthread “ if he did not think there was danger of departing from this spirit, and losing the simplicity of Christ, when we conduct Christian business on worldly principle.”

Dr. Packthread cordially assented, and continued to the same purpose in a strain so edifying as entirely to exhaust the subject ; and Dr. Calker, who was thinking of the business that was before them, giving an uneasy motion here, they immediately united in the devotional exercises, which were led with great fervor by Dr. Cushing.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RESULT.

AFTER the devotional services were over, Dr. Calker proceeded immediately with the business that he had in his mind. "Now, brother Cushing," he said, "there never was any instrumentality raised up by Providence to bring in the latter day equal to the Presbyterian church in the United States of America. It is the great hope of the world ; for here, in this country, we are trying the great experiment for all ages ; and, undoubtedly, the Presbyterian church comes the nearest perfection of any form of organization possible to our frail humanity. It is the ark of the covenant for this nation, and for all nations. Missionary enterprises to foreign countries, tract societies, home missionary, seamen's friend societies, Bible societies, Sunday-school unions, all are embraced in its bosom ; and it grows in a free country, planted by God's own right hand, with such laws and institutions as never were given to mortal man before. It is carrying us right on to the millennium ; and all we want is *union*. United, we stand the most glorious, the most powerful institution in the world. Now, there was no need for you Southern brethren to be so restive as you were. We were doing all we could to keep down the fire, and keep things quiet, and you ought not to have bolted so. Since you have separated from us, what have we done ? I suppose you thought we were going to blaze out in a regular abolition fury ; but you see we haven't done it. We haven't done any more than when we were united. Just look at our minutes, and you'll see it. We have

strong and determined abolitionists among us, and they are constantly urging and pushing. There have been great public excitements on the subject of slavery, and we have been plagued and teased to declare ourselves; but we haven't done it in a single instance—not one. You see that Ruskin and his clique have gone off from us, because we would hold still. It is true that now and then we had to let some anti-slavery man preach an opening sermon, or something of that sort; but, then, opening sermons are nothing; they don't commit anybody; they don't show the opinion of anybody but the speaker. In fact, they don't express any more than that declaration of eighteen hundred and eighteen, which stands unrepealed on *your* records, as well as on ours. Of course, we are all willing to say that slavery is an evil, 'entirely inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel,' and all that, because that's on your own books; we only agree to say nothing about it, nowadays, in our public capacity, because what was said in eighteen hundred and eighteen is all-sufficient, and prevents the odium and scandal of public controversy now. Now, for proof that what I have just said is true, look at the facts. We had three presbyteries in slaveholding states when we started, and now we have over twenty, with from fifteen to twenty thousand members. That must show you what our hearts are on this subject. And, have we not always been making overtures for reünion—really humbling ourselves to you, brethren? Now, I say you ought to take these facts into account; our slaveholding members and churches are left as perfectly undisturbed, to manage in their own way, as yours. To be sure, some of those Western men will fire off a remonstrance once a year, or something of that sort. Just let them do that; it keeps them easy and contented. And, so long as there is really no interfering in the way of discipline or control, what harm is done? You ought to bear some with the Northern brethren, unreasonable as they are; and we may well have a discussion every year, to let off the steam."

“For my part,” said father Bonnie, “I want union, I’m sure. I’d tar and feather those Northern abolitionists, if I could get at them!”

“*Figuratively*, I suppose,” said Dr. Packthread, with a gentle smile.

“Yes, figuratively and literally too,” said father Bonnie, laughing. “Let them come down here, and see what they’ll get! If they will set the country in a blaze, they ought to be the first ones to be warmed at the fire. For my part, brethren, I must say that you lose time and strength by your admissions, all of you. You don’t hit the buck in the eye. I thank the Lord that I am delivered from the bondage of thinking slavery a sin, or an evil, in any sense. Our abolitionist brethren have done one good thing; they have driven us up to examine the Scriptures, and there we find that slavery is not only permitted, but appointed, enjoined. It is a divine institution. If a Northern abolitionist comes at me now, I shake the Bible at him, and say, ‘Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?’ Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make one lump to honor, and another to dishonor? I tell you brethren, it blazes from every page of the Scriptures. You’ll never do anything till you get on to that ground. A man’s conscience is always hanging on to his skirts; he goes on just like a bear with a trap on his legs—can’t make any progress that way. You have got to get your feet on the rock of ages, I can tell you, and get the trap off your leg. There’s nothing like the study of the Scriptures to clear a fellow’s mind.”

“Well, then,” said Clayton, “would it not be well to repeal the laws which forbid the slaves to learn to read, and put the Scriptures into their hands? These laws are the cause of a great deal of misery and immorality among the slaves, and they furnish abolitionists with some of their strongest arguments.”

“O,” said father Bonnie, “that will never do, in the world! It will expose them to whole floods of abolition

and incendiary documents, corrupt their minds, and make them discontented."

"Well," said Dr. Cushing, "I have read Dr. Carnes' book, and I must say that the scriptural argument lies, in my mind, on the other side."

"Hang Dr. Carnes' book!" said father Bonnie.

"Figuratively, I suppose," said Dr. Packthread.

"Why, Dr. Carnes' much learning has made him mad!" said father Bonnie. "I don't believe anything that can't be got out of a plain English Bible. When a fellow goes shuffling off in a Hebrew fog, in a Latin fog, in a Greek fog, I say, 'Ah, my boy, you are treed! you had better come down!' Why, is it not plain enough to any reader of the Bible, how the apostles talked to the slaves? They did n't fill their heads with stuff about the rights of man. Now, see here, just at a venture," he said, making a dive at a pocket-Bible that lay on the table, — "now, just let me read you, '*Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal.*' Sho! sho! that is n't the place I was thinking of. It's here, '*Servants, obey your masters!*' There's into them, you see! '*Obey your masters that are in the flesh.*' Now, these abolitionists won't even allow that we are masters!"

"Perhaps," said Clayton, quietly, "if the slaves could read, they'd pay more attention to the first passage that you favored us with."

"O, likely," said father Bonnie, "because, you see, their interests naturally would lead them to pervert Scripture. If it was n't for that perverting influence of self-love, I, for my part, would be willing enough to put the Scriptures into their hands."

"I suppose," said Clayton, "there's no such danger in the case of us masters, is there?"

"I say," said father Bonnie, not noticing the interruption, "Cushing, you ought to read Fletcher's book. That book, sir, is a sweater, I can tell you; I sweat over it, I know; but it does up this Greek and Hebrew work

thoroughly, I promise you. Though I can't read Greek or Hebrew, I see there's heaps of it there. Why, he takes you clear back to the creation of the world, and drags you through all the history and literature of the old botherers of all ages, and he comes down on the fathers like forty. There's Chrysostom and Tertullian, and all the rest of those old cocks, and the old Greek philosophers, besides, — Plato, and Aristotle, and all the rest of them. If a fellow wants learning, there he'll get it. I declare, I'd rather cut my way through the Dismal Swamp in dog-days! But I was determined to be thorough; so I off coat, and went at it. And, there's no mistake about it, Cushing, you must get the book. You'll feel so much better, if you'll settle your mind on that point. I never allow myself to go trailing along with anything hanging by the gills. I am an out-and-outer. Walk up to the captain's office, and settle! That's what I say."

"We shall all have to do that, one of these days," said father Dickson, "and maybe we shall find it one thing to settle with the clerk, and another to settle with the captain!"

"Well, brother Dickson, you need n't look at me with any of your solemn faces! I'm settled, now."

"For my part," said Dr. Packthread, "I think, instead of condemning slavery in the abstract, we ought to direct our attention to its abuses."

"And what do you consider its abuses?" said Clayton.

"Why, the separation of families, for instance," said Dr. Packthread, "and the forbidding of education."

"You think, then," said Clayton, "that the slave ought to have a legal right to his family?"

"Yes."

"Of course, he ought to have the legal means of maintaining it?"

"Yes."

"Then, of course, he ought to be able to enter suit

when this right is violated, and to bear testimony in a court of justice?"

"Yes."

"And do you think that the master ought to give him what is just and equal, in the way of wages?"

"Certainly, in one shape or another," said Dr. Packthread.

"And ought the slave to have the means of enforcing this right?"

"Certainly."

"Then the slave ought to be able to hold property?"

"Yes."

"And he should have the legal right to secure education, if he desires it?"

"Yes."

"Well," said Clayton, "when the slave has a legal existence and legal rights, can hold property and defend it, acquire education and protect his family relations, he ceases to be a slave; for, slavery consists in the fact of legal incapacity for any of these things. It consists in making a man a dead, inert substance in the hands of another, holding men *pro nullis, pro mortuis*. What you call reforming abuses, is abolishing slavery. It is in this very way that I wish to seek its abolition, and I desire the aid of the church and ministry in doing it. Now, Dr. Packthread, what efforts has the church as yet made to reform these abuses of slavery?"

There was a silence of some minutes. At last Dr. Cushing replied,

"There has been a good deal of effort made in oral religious instruction."

"O, yes," said father Bonnie, "our people have been at it with great zeal in our part of the country. I have a class, myself, that I have been instructing in the Assembly's Catechism, in the oral way; and the synods have taken it up, and they are preaching the Gospel to them, and writing catechisms for them."

“But,” said Clayton, “would it not be best to give them a legal ability to obey the Gospel? Is there any use in teaching the sanctity of marriage, unless you obtain for husbands and wives the legal right to live faithful to each other? It seems to me only cruelty to awaken conscience on that subject, without giving the protection and assistance of law.”

“What he says is very true,” said Dr. Cushing, with emphasis. “We ministers are called to feel the necessity of that with regard to our slave church-members. You see, we are obliged to preach unlimited obedience to masters; and yet, — why, it was only last week, a very excellent pious mulatto woman in my church came to me to know what she should do. Her master was determined she should live with him as a mistress; yet she has a husband on the place. How am I to advise her? The man is a very influential man, and capable of making a good deal of commotion; besides which, she will gain nothing by resistance, but to be sold away to some other master, who will do worse. Now, this is a very trying case to a minister. I’m sure, if anything could be done, I’d be glad; but the fact is, the moment a person begins to move in the least to reform these abuses, he is called an abolitionist, and the whole community is down on him at once. That’s the state these northern fanatics have got us into.”

“O, yes,” said Dr. Baskum, a leading minister, who had recently come in. “Besides, a man can’t do everything! We’ve got as much as we can stagger under on our shoulders, now. We’ve got the building up of the church to attend to. That’s the great instrumentality which at last will set everything straight. We must do as the apostles did, — confine ourselves to preaching the Gospel, and the Gospel will bring everything else in its train. The world can’t be made over in a day. We must do one thing at a time. We can’t afford, just at present, to tackle in with all our other difficulties the odium and misrepresentation of such a movement. The minute we begin to do anything

which looks like restraining the rights of masters, the cry of church and state and abolition will be raised, and we shall be swamped ! ”

“ But,” said father Dickson, “ is n’t it the right way first to find out our duty and do it, and then leave the result with God ? Ought we to take counsel of flesh and blood in matters like these ? ”

“ Of course not,” said Dr. Packthread. “ But there is a wise way and an unwise way of doing things. We are to consider the times, and only undertake such works as the movements of Divine Providence seem to indicate. I don’t wish to judge for brethren. A time may come when it will be their duty to show themselves openly on this subject ; but, in order to obtain a foothold for the influences of the Gospel to work on, it may be necessary to bear and forbear with many evils. Under the present state of things, I hope many of the slaves are becoming hopefully pious. Brethren seem to feel that education will be attended with dangers. Probably it might. It would seem desirable to secure the family relations of the slaves, if it could be done without too much sacrifice of more important things. After all, the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ is not of this world. The apostles entered no public protest against the abuses of slavery, that we read of.”

“ It strikes me,” said Clayton, “ that there is a difference between our position under a republican government, — in which we vote for our legislators, and, in fact, make the laws ourselves, and have the admitted right to seek their repeal, — and that of the apostles, who were themselves slaves, and could do nothing about the laws. We make our own laws, and every one of us is responsible for any unjust law which we do not do our best to alter. We have the right to agitate, write, print, and speak, and bring up the public mind to the point of reform ; and, therefore, we are responsible if unjust laws are not repealed.”

“ Well,” said father Dickson, “ God forgive me that I have been so remiss in times past ! Henceforth, whatever

others may do, I will not confer with flesh and blood ; but I will go forth and declare the word of the Lord plainly to this people, and show unto the house of Judah their transgressions. And now I have one thing to say to our dear Northern brethren. I mourn over the undecided course which they take. Brethren in slave states are beset with many temptations. The whole course of public opinion is against them. They need that their Northern brethren should stand firm, and hold up their hands. Alas ! how different has been their course ! Their apologies for this mighty sin have weakened us more than all things put together. Public opinion is going back. The church is becoming corrupted. Ministers are drawn into connivance with deadly sin. Children and youth are being ruined by habits of early tyranny. Our land is full of slave-prisons ; and the poor trader—no man careth for his soul ! Our poor whites are given up to ignorance and licentiousness ; and our ministers, like our brother Bonnie, here, begin to defend this evil from the Bible. Brother Calker, here, talks of the Presbyterian church. Alas ! in her skirts is found the blood of poor innocents, and she is willing, for the sake of union, to destroy them for whom Christ died. Brethren, you know not what you do. You enjoy the blessing of living in a land uncursed by any such evils. Your churches, your schools, and all your industrial institutions, are going forward, while ours are going backward ; and you do not feel it, because you do not live among us. But take care ! One part of the country cannot become demoralized, without, at last, affecting the other. The sin you cherish and strengthen by your indifference, may at last come back in judgments that may visit even you. I pray God to avert it ! But, as God is just, I tremble for you and for us ! Well, good-by, brethren ; I must be on my way. You will not listen to me, and my soul cannot come into your counsels.”

And father Dickson rose to depart.

“ O, come, come, now, brother, don’t take it so seriously ! ”

said Dr. Cushing. "Stay, at least, and spend the day with us, and let us have a little Christian talk."

"I must go," said father Dickson. "I have an appointment to preach, which I must keep, for this evening, and so I must bid you farewell. I hoped to do something by coming here; but I see that it is all in vain. Farewell, brethren; I shall pray for you."

"Well, father Dickson, I should like to talk more with you on this subject," said Dr. Cushing. "Do come again. It is very difficult to see the path of duty in these matters."

Poor Dr. Cushing was one of those who are destined, like stationary ships, forever to float up and down in one spot, only useful in marking the ebb and flood of the tide. Affection, generosity, devotion, he had—everything but the power to move on.

Clayton, who had seen at once that nothing was to be done or gained, rose, and said that his business was also pressing, and that he would accompany father Dickson on his way.

"What a good fellow Dickson is!" said Cushing, after he returned to the room.

"He exhibits a very excellent spirit," said Dr. Packthread.

"O, Dickson would do well enough," said Dr. Calker, "if he was n't a monomaniac. That's what's the matter with him! But when he gets to going on this subject, I never hear what he says. I know it's no use to reason with him—entirely time lost. I have heard all these things over and over again."

"But I wish," said Dr. Cushing, "something could be done."

"Well, who does n't?" said Dr. Calker. "We all wish something could be done; but, if it can't, it can't; there's the end of it. So now let us proceed, and look into business a little more particularly."

"After all," said Dr. Packthread, "you old school breth-

ren have greatly the advantage of us. Although you have a few poor good souls, like this Dickson, they are in so insignificant a minority that they can do nothing — can't even get into the general assembly, or send in a remonstrance, or petition, or anything else ; so that you are never plagued as we are. We cannot even choose a moderator from the slaveholding states, for fear of an explosion ; but you can have slaveholding moderators, or anything else that will promote harmony and union."

CHAPTER XX.

THE SLAVE'S ARGUMENT.

ON his return home, Clayton took from the post-office a letter, which we will give to our readers.

“MR. CLAYTON: I am now an outcast. I cannot show my face in the world, I cannot go abroad by daylight; for no crime, as I can see, except resisting oppression. Mr. Clayton, if it were proper for your fathers to fight and shed blood for the oppression that came upon them, why is n't it right for us? They had not half the provocation that we have. Their wives and families were never touched. They were not bought, and sold, and traded, like cattle in the market, as we are. In fact, when I was reading that history, I could hardly understand what provocation they did have. They had everything easy and comfortable about them. They were able to support their families, even in luxury. And yet they were willing to plunge into war, and shed blood. I have studied the Declaration of Independence. The things mentioned there were bad and uncomfortable, to be sure; but, after all, look at the laws which are put over *us*! Now, if they had forbidden them to teach their children to read, — if they had divided them all out among masters, and declared them incapable of holding property as the mule before the plough, — there would have been some sense in that revolution.

“Well, how was it with our people in South Carolina? Denmark Vesey was a *man*! His history is just what George Washington's would have been, if you had failed.

What set him on in his course? The Bible and your Declaration of Independence. What does your Declaration say? 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that *all men are created equal*; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain *inalienable* rights: that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That *to secure these rights* governments are instituted among men. That *whenever any form of government becomes destructive of any of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it.*' Now, what do you make of that? This is read to us, every Fourth of July. It was read to Denmark Vesey and Peter Poyas, and all those other brave, good men, who dared to follow your example and your precepts. Well, they failed, and your people hung them. And they said they could n't conceive what motive could have induced them to make the effort. They had food enough, and clothes enough, and were kept very comfortable. Well, had not your people clothes enough, and food enough? and wouldn't you still have had enough, even if you had remained a province of England to this day, — much better living, much better clothes, and much better laws, than we have to-day? I heard your father's interpretation of the law; I heard Mr. Jekyl's; and yet, when men rise up against such laws, you wonder what in the world could have induced them! That's perfectly astonishing!

"But, of all the injuries and insults that are heaped upon us, there is nothing to me so perfectly maddening as the assumption of your religious men, who maintain and defend this enormous injustice by the Bible. We have all the right to rise against them that they had to rise against England. They tell us the Bible says, 'Servants, obey your masters.' Well, the Bible says, also, 'The powers that be are ordained of God, and whoso resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.' If it was right for them to resist the ordinance of God, it is right for us. If the Bible does justify slavery, why don't they teach the slave to read it? And what's the reason that two of the greatest insurrections

came from men who read scarcely anything else but the Bible? No, the fact is, they don't believe this themselves. If they did, they would try the experiment fairly of giving the Bible to their slaves. I can assure you the Bible looks as different to a slave from what it does to a master, as everything else in the world does.

"Now, Mr. Clayton, you understand that when I say *you*, along here, I do not mean you personally, but the generality of the community of which you are one. I want you to think these things over, and, whatever my future course may be, remember my excuse for it is the same as that on which your government is built.

"I am very grateful to you for all your kindness. Perhaps the time may come when I shall be able to show my gratitude. Meanwhile, I must ask one favor of you, which I think you will grant for the sake of that angel who is gone. I have a sister, who, as well as myself, is the child of Tom Gordon's father. She was beautiful and good, and her owner, who had a large estate in Mississippi, took her to Ohio, emancipated and married her. She has two children by him, a son and a daughter. He died, and left his estate to her and her children. Tom Gordon is the heir-at-law. He has sued for the property, and obtained it. The act of emancipation has been declared null and void, and my sister and her children are in the hands of that man, with all that absolute power; and they have no appeal from him for any evil whatever. She has escaped his hands, so she wrote me once; but I have heard a report that he has taken her again. The pious Mr. Jekyl will know all about it. Now, may I ask you to go to him, and make inquiries, and let me know? A letter sent to Mr. James Twitchel, at the post-office near Canema, where our letters used to be taken, will get to me. By doing this favor, you will secure my eternal gratitude.

HARRY GORDON."

Clayton read this letter with some surprise, and a good deal of attention. It was written on very coarse paper,

such as is commonly sold at the low shops. Where Harry was, and how concealed, was to him only a matter of conjecture. But the call to render him any assistance was a sacred one, and he determined on a horseback excursion to E., the town where Mr. Jekyl resided.

He found that gentleman very busy in looking over and arranging papers in relation to that large property which had just come into Tom Gordon's hands. He began by stating that the former owner of the servants at Canema had requested him, on her death-bed, to take an interest in her servants. He had therefore called to ascertain if anything had been heard from Harry.

"Not yet," said Mr. Jekyl, pulling up his shirt-collar. "Our plantations in this vicinity are very unfortunate in their proximity to the swamp. It's a great expense of time and money. Why, sir, it's inconceivable, the amount of property that's lost in that swamp! I have heard it estimated at something like three millions of dollars! We follow them up with laws, you see. They are outlawed regularly, after a certain time, and then the hunters go in and chase them down; sometimes kill two or three a day, or something like that. But, on the whole, they don't effect much."

"Well," said Clayton, who felt no disposition to enter into any discussion with Mr. Jekyl, "so you think he is there?"

"Yes, I have no doubt of it. The fact is, there's a fellow that's been seen lurking about this swamp, off and on, for years and years. Sometimes he isn't to be seen for months; and then again he is seen or heard of, but never so that anybody can get hold of him. I have no doubt the niggers on the plantation know him; but, then, you can never get anything out of them. O, they are deep! They are a dreadfully corrupt set!"

"Mr. Gordon has, I think, a sister of Harry's, who came in with this new estate," said Mr. Clayton.

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Jekyl. "She has given us a good

deal of trouble, too. She got away, and went off to Cincinnati, and I had to go up and hunt her out. It was really a great deal of trouble and expense. If I had n't been assisted by the politeness and kindness of the marshal and brother officers, it would have been very bad. There is a good deal of religious society, too, in Cincinnati; and so, while I was waiting, I attended anniversary meetings."

"Then you did succeed," said Clayton. "I came to see whether Mr. Gordon would listen to a proposition for selling her."

"O, he has sold her!" said Mr. Jekyl. "She is at Alexandria, now, in Beaton & Burns' establishment."

"And her children, too?"

"Yes, the lot. I claim some little merit for that, myself. Tom is a fellow of rather strong passions, and he was terribly angry for the trouble she had made. I don't know what he would have done to her, if I had n't talked to him. But I showed him some debts that could n't be put off any longer without too much of a sacrifice; and, on the whole, I persuaded him to let her be sold. I have tried to exert a good influence over him, in a quiet way," said Mr. Jekyl. "Now, if you want to get the woman, like enough she may not be sold, as yet."

Clayton, having thus ascertained the points which he wished to know, proceeded immediately to Alexandria. When he was there, he found a considerable excitement.

"A slave-woman," it was said, "who was to have been sent off in a coffin the next day, had murdered her two children."

The moment that Clayton heard the news, he felt an instinctive certainty that this woman was Cora Gordon. He went to the magistrate's court, where the investigation was being held, and found it surrounded by a crowd so dense that it was with difficulty he forced his way in. At the bar he saw seated a woman dressed in black, whose face, haggard and wan, showed yet traces of former beauty. The splendid dark eyes had a peculiar and fierce expression. The thin lines of the face were settled into an immovable

fixedness of calm determination. There was even an air of grave, solemn triumph on her countenance. She appeared to regard the formalities of the court with the utmost indifference. At last she spoke, in a clear, thrilling, distinct voice :

“ If gentlemen will allow me to speak, I ’ll save them the trouble of that examination of witnesses. It ’s going a long way round to find out a very little thing.”

There was an immediate movement of curiosity in the whole throng, and the officer said,

“ You are permitted to speak.”

She rose deliberately, untied her bonnet-strings, looked round the whole court, with a peculiar but calm expression of mingled triumph and power.

“ You want to know,” she said, “ who killed those children ! Well, I will tell you ;” and again her eyes travelled round the house, with that same strong, defiant expression ; “ I killed them !”

There was a pause, and a general movement through the house.

“ Yes,” she said, again, “ I killed them ! And, O, how glad I am that I have done it ! Do you want to know what I killed them for ? Because I loved them ! — loved them so well that I was willing to give up my soul to save theirs ! I have heard some persons say that I was in a frenzy, excited, and did n’t know what I was doing. They are mistaken. I was not in a frenzy ; I was not excited ; and I did know what I was doing ! and I bless God that it is done ! I was born the slave of my own father. Your old proud Virginia blood is in my veins, as it is in half of those you whip and sell. I was the lawful wife of a man of honor, who did what he could to evade your cruel laws, and set me free. My children were born to liberty ; they were brought up to liberty, till my father’s son entered a suit for us, and made us *slaves*. Judge and jury helped him — all your laws and your officers helped him — to take away the rights of the widow and the fatherless ! The judge said that my

son, being a slave, could no more hold property than the mule before his plough; and we were delivered into Tom Gordon's hands. I shall not say what he is. It is not fit to be said. God will show at the judgment-day. But I escaped, with my children, to Cincinnati. He followed me there, and the laws of your country gave me back to him. To-morrow I was to have gone in a coffin and leave these children — my son a slave for life — my daughter —" She looked round the court-room with an expression which said more than words could have spoken. "So I heard them say their prayers and sing their hymns, and then, while they were asleep and did n't know it, I sent them to lie down in green pastures with the Lord. They say this is a dreadful sin. It may be so. I am willing to lose my soul to have *theirs saved*. I have no more to hope or fear. It's all nothing, now, where I go or what becomes of me. But, at any rate, they are safe. And, now, if any of you mothers, in my place, would n't have done the same, you either don't know what slavery is, or you don't love your children as I have loved mine. This is all."

She sat down, folded her arms, fixed her eyes on the floor, and seemed like a person entirely indifferent to the further opinions and proceedings of the court.

She was remanded to jail for trial. Clayton determined, in his own mind, to do what he could for her. Her own declaration seemed to make the form of a trial unnecessary. He resolved, however, to do what he could to enlist for her the sympathy of some friends of his in the city.

The next day he called, with a clergyman, and requested permission to see her. When they entered her cell, she rose to receive them with the most perfect composure, as if they had called upon her in a drawing-room. Clayton introduced his companion as the Rev. Mr. Denton. There was an excited flash in her eyes, but she said, calmly,

"Have the gentlemen business with me?"

"We called," said the clergyman, "to see if we could render you any assistance."

"No, sir, you cannot!" was the prompt reply.

"My dear friend," said the clergyman, in a very kind tone, "I wish it were in my power to administer to you the consolations of the Gospel."

"I have nothing to do," she answered, firmly, "with ministers who pretend to preach the Gospel, and support oppression and robbery! Your hands are defiled with blood!—so don't come to me! I am a prisoner, here, and cannot resist. But, when I tell you that I prefer to be left alone, perhaps it may have some effect, even if I am a slave!"

Clayton took out Harry's letter, handed it to her, and said:

"After you have read this, you will, perhaps, receive me, if I should call again to-morrow, at this hour."

The next day, when Clayton called, he was conducted by the jailer to the door of the cell.

"There is a lady with her now, reading to her."

"Then I ought not to interrupt her," said Clayton, hesitating.

"O, I suspect it would make no odds," said the jailer.

Clayton laid his hand on his to stop him. The sound that came indistinctly through the door was the voice of prayer. Some woman was interceding, in the presence of eternal pity, for an oppressed and broken-hearted sister. After a few moments the door was partly opened, and he heard a sweet voice, saying:

"Let me come to you every day, may I? I know what it is to suffer."

A smothered sob was the only answer; and then followed words, imperfectly distinguished, which seemed to be those of consolation. In a moment the door was opened, and Clayton found himself suddenly face to face with a lady in deep mourning. She was tall, and largely proportioned; the outlines of her face strong, yet beautiful, and now wearing the expression which comes from communion with the highest and serenest nature. Both

were embarrassed, and made a momentary pause. In the start she dropped one of her gloves. Clayton picked it up, handed it to her, bowed, and she passed on. By some singular association, this stranger, with a serious, radiant face, suggested to him the sparkling, glittering beauty of Nina; and it seemed, for a moment, as if Nina was fluttering by him in the air, and passing away after her. When he examined the emotion more minutely afterwards, he thought, perhaps, it might have been suggested by the perception, as he lifted the glove, of a peculiar and delicate perfume, which Nina was fond of using. So strange and shadowy are the influences which touch the dark, electric chain of our existence.

When Clayton went into the cell, he found its inmate in a softened mood. There were traces of tears on her cheek, and an open Bible on the bed; but her appearance was calm and self-possessed, as usual. She said:

"Excuse my rudeness, Mr. Clayton, at your last visit. We cannot always command ourselves to do exactly what we should. I thank you very much for your kindness to us. There are many who are kindly disposed towards us; but it's very little that they can do."

"Can I be of any assistance in securing counsel for you?" said Clayton.

"I don't need any counsel. I don't wish any," said she. "I shall make no effort. Let the law take its course. If you ever should see Harry, give my love to him—that's all! And, if you can help him, pray do! If you have time, influence, or money to spare, and can get him to any country where he will have the common rights of a human being, pray do, and the blessing of the poor will come on you! That's all I have to ask."

Clayton rose to depart. He had fulfilled the object of his mission. He had gained all the information, and more than all, that he wished. He queried with himself whether it were best to write to Harry at all. The facts that he had to relate were such as were calculated to kindle to a fiercer

flame the excitement which was now consuming him. He trembled, when he thought of it, lest that excitement should blaze out in forms which should array against him, with still more force, that society with which he was already at war. Thinking, however, that Harry, perhaps, might obtain the information in some less guarded form, he sat down and wrote him the following letter :

“ I have received your letter. I need not say that I am sorry for all that has taken place — sorry for your sake, and for the sake of one very dear both to me and to you. Harry, I freely admit that you live in a state of society which exercises a great injustice. I admit your right, and that of all men, to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I admit the right of an oppressed people to change their form of government, *if they can*. I admit that your people suffer under greater oppression than ever our fathers suffered. And, if I believed that they were capable of obtaining and supporting a government, I should believe in their right to take the same means to gain it. But I do not, at present; and I think, if you will reflect on the subject, you will agree with me. I do not think that, should they make an effort, they would succeed. They would only embitter the white race against them, and destroy that sympathy which many are beginning to feel for their oppressed condition. I know it seems a very unfeeling thing for a man who is at ease to tell one, who is oppressed and suffering, to be patient; and yet I must even say it. It is my place, and our place, to seek repeal of the unjust laws which oppress you. I see no reason why the relation of master and servants may not be continued through our states, and the servants yet be free men. I am satisfied that it would be for the best interests of master as well as slave. If this is the truth, time will make it apparent, and the change will come. With regard to you, the best counsel I can give is, that you try to escape to some of the northern states; and I will furnish you with means to begin

life there under better auspices. I am very sorry that I have to tell you something very painful about your sister. She was sold to a trading-house in Alexandria, and, in desperation, has killed both her children! For this she is now in prison, awaiting her trial! I have been to see her, and offered every assistance in my power. She declines all. She does not wish to live, and has already avowed the fact; making no defence, and wishing none to be made for her. Another of the bitter fruits of this most unrighteous system! She desired her love and kind wishes to you. Whatever more is to be known, I will tell you at some future time.

“After all that I have said to you in this letter, I cannot help feeling, for myself, how hard, and cold, and insufficient, it must seem to you! If I had such a sister as yours, and her life had been so wrecked, I feel that I might not have patience to consider any of these things; and I am afraid you will not. Yet I feel this injustice to my heart. I feel it like a personal affliction; and, God helping me, I will make it the object of my life to remedy it! Your sister’s trial will not take place for some time; and she has friends who do all that can be done for her.”

Clayton returned to his father’s house, and related the result of his first experiment with the clergy.

“Well, now,” said Mrs. Clayton, “I must confess I was not prepared for this.”

“I was,” said Judge Clayton. “It’s precisely what I expected. You have tried the Presbyterians, with whom our family are connected; and now you may go successively to the Episcopalians, the Methodists, the Baptists, and you will hear the same story from them all. About half of them defend the thing from the Bible, in the most unblushing, disgusting manner. The other half acknowledge and lament it as an evil; but they are cowed and timid, and can do nothing.”

“Well,” said Clayton, “the greatest evidence to my

mind of the inspiration of the Scriptures is, that they are yet afloat, when every new absurdity has been successively tacked to them."

"But," said Mrs. Clayton, "are there no people that are faithful?"

"None in this matter that I know of," said Judge Clayton, "except the Covenanters and the Quakers among us, and the Free-will Baptists and a few others at the North. And their number and influence is so small, that there can be no great calculation made on them for assistance. Of individuals, there are not a few who earnestly desire to do something; but they are mostly without faith or hope, like me. And, from the communities — from the great organizations in society — no help whatever is to be expected."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE DESERT.

THERE is no study in human nature more interesting than the aspects of the same subject seen in the points of view of different characters. One might almost imagine that there were no such thing as absolute truth, since a change of situation or temperament is capable of changing the whole force of an argument. We have been accustomed, even those of us who feel most, to look on the arguments for and against the system of slavery with the eyes of those who are at ease. We do not even know how fair is freedom, for we were always free. We shall never have all the materials for absolute truth on this subject, till we take into account, with our own views and reasonings, the views and reasonings of those who have bowed down to the yoke, and felt the iron enter into their souls. We all console ourselves too easily for the sorrows of others. We talk and reason coolly of that which, did we feel it ourselves, would take away all power of composure and self-control. We have seen how the masters feel and reason; how good men feel and reason, whose public opinion and Christian fellowship support the master, and give him confidence in his position. We must add, also, to our estimate, the feelings and reasonings of the slave; and, therefore, the reader must follow us again to the fastness in the Dismal Swamp.

It is a calm, still, Indian-summer afternoon. The whole air is flooded with a golden haze, in which the tree-tops move dreamily to and fro, as if in a whispering revery. The wild climbing grape-vines, which hang in thousand-fold

festoons round the enclosure, are purpling with grapes. The little settlement now has among its inmates Old Tiff and his children, and Harry and his wife. The children and Tiff had been received in the house of the widow whose husband had fallen a victim to the hunters, as we mentioned in one of our former chapters. All had united in building for Harry and Lisette a cabin contiguous to the other.

Old Tiff, with his habitual industry, might now be seen hoeing in the sweet-potato patch, which belonged to the common settlement. The children were roaming up and down, looking after autumn flowers and grapes.

Dred, who had been out all the night before, was now lying on the ground on the shady side of the clearing, with an old, much-worn, much-thumbed copy of the Bible by his side. It was the Bible of Denmark Vesey, and in many a secret meeting its wild, inspiring poetry had sounded like a trumpet in his youthful ear.

He lay with his elbow resting on the ground, his hands supporting his massive head, and his large, gloomy, dark eyes fixed in revery on the moving tree-tops as they waved in the golden blue. Now his eye followed sailing islands of white cloud, drifting to and fro above them. There were elements in him which might, under other circumstances, have made him a poet.

His frame, capacious and energetic as it was, had yet that keenness of excitability which places the soul en rapport with all the great forces of nature. The only book which he had been much in the habit of reading — the book, in fact, which had been the nurse and forming power of his soul — was the Bible, distinguished above all other literature for its intense sympathy with nature. Dred, indeed, resembled in organization and tone of mind some of those men of old who were dwellers in the wilderness, and drew their inspirations from the desert.

It is remarkable that, in all ages, communities and individuals who have suffered under oppression have always fled for refuge to the Old Testament, and to the book of

Revelation in the New. Even if not definitely understood, these magnificent compositions have a wild, inspiring power, like a wordless yet impassioned symphony played by a sublime orchestra, in which deep and awful sub-bass instruments mingle with those of ethereal softness, and wild minors twine and interlace with marches of battles and bursts of victorious harmony.

They are much mistaken who say that nothing is efficient as a motive that is not definitely understood. Who ever thought of understanding the mingled wail and roar of the Marseillaise? Just this kind of indefinite stimulating power has the Bible to the souls of the oppressed. There is also a disposition, which has manifested itself since the primitive times, by which the human soul, bowed down beneath the weight of mighty oppressions, and despairing, in its own weakness, seizes with avidity the intimations of a coming judgment, in which the Son of Man, appearing in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, shall right earth's mighty wrongs.

In Dred's mind this thought had acquired an absolute ascendancy. All things in nature and in revelation he interpreted by this key.

During the prevalence of the cholera, he had been pervaded by a wild and solemn excitement. To him it was the opening of a seal — the sounding of the trumpet of the first angel. And other woes were yet to come.

He was not a man of personal malignity to any human being. When he contemplated schemes of insurrection and bloodshed, he contemplated them with the calm, immovable firmness of one who felt himself an instrument of doom in a mightier hand. In fact, although seldom called into exercise by the incidents of his wild and solitary life, there was in him a vein of that gentleness which softens the heart towards children and the inferior animals. The amusement of his vacant hours was sometimes to exercise his peculiar gifts over the animal creation, by drawing towards him the birds and squirrels from the coverts of the forest, and

giving them food. Indeed, he commonly carried corn in the hunting-dress which he wore, to use for this purpose. Just at this moment, as he lay absorbed in revery, he heard Teddy, who was near him, calling to his sister.

"O, Fanny, do come and see this squirrel, he is so pretty!"

Fanny came running, eagerly. "Where is he?" she said.

"O, he is gone; he just went behind that tree."

The children, in their eagerness, had not perceived how near they were to Dred. He had turned his face towards them, and was looking at them with a pleased expression, approaching to a smile.

"Do you want to see him?" he said. "Stop a few minutes."

He rose and scattered a train of corn between him and the thicket, and, sitting down on the ground, began making a low sound, resembling the call of the squirrel to its young. In a few moments Teddy and Fanny were in a tremor of eager excitement, as a pair of little bright eyes appeared among the leaves, and gradually their owner, a brisk little squirrel, came out and began rapidly filling its chops with the corn. Dred still continued, with his eyes fixed on the animal, to make the same noise. Very soon two others were seen following their comrade. The children laughed when they saw the headmost squirrel walk into Dred's hand, which he had laid upon the ground, the others soon following his example. Dred took them up, and, softly stroking them, they seemed to become entirely amenable to his will; and, to amuse the children, he let them go into his hunting-pouch to eat the corn that was there. After this, they seemed to make a rambling expedition over his whole person, investigating his pockets, hiding themselves in the bosom of his shirt, and seeming apparently perfectly fearless, and at home.

Fanny reached out her hand, timidly. "Won't they come to me?" she said.

"No, daughter," said Dred, with a smile, "they don't

know you. In the new earth the enmity will be taken away, and then they 'll come."

"I wonder what he means by the new earth!" said Fanny.

Dred seemed to feel a kind of pleasure in the admiration of the children, to which, perhaps, no one is wholly insensible. He proceeded, therefore, to show them some other of his accomplishments. The wood was resounding with the afternoon song of birds, and Dred suddenly began answering one of the songsters with an exact imitation of his note. The bird evidently heard it, and answered back with still more spirit; and thus an animated conversation was kept up for some time.

"You see," he said, "that I understand the speech of birds. After the great judgment, the elect shall talk with the birds and the beasts in the new earth. Every kind of bird has a different language, in which they show why men should magnify the Lord, and turn from their wickedness. But the sinners cannot hear it, because their ear is waxed gross."

"I did n't know," said Fanny, hesitatingly, "as that was so. How did you find it out?"

"The Spirit of the Lord revealed it unto me, child."

"What is the Spirit?" said Fanny, who felt more encouraged, as she saw Dred stroking a squirrel.

"It's the Spirit that spoke in the old prophets," he said.

"Did it tell you what the birds say?"

"I am not perfected in holiness yet, and cannot receive it. But the birds fly up near the heavens, wherefore they learn droppings of the speech of angels. I never kill the birds, because the Lord hath set them between us and the angels for a sign."

"What else did the Spirit tell you?" said Teddy.

"He showed me that there was a language in the leaves," said Dred. "For I rose and looked, and, behold, there were signs drawn on the leaves, and forms of every living thing, with strange words, which the wicked understand not, but

the elect shall read them. And, behold, the signs are in blood, which is the blood of the Lamb, that descendeth like dew from heaven."

Fanny looked puzzled. "Who are the elect?" she said.

"They?" said Dred. "They are the hundred and forty and four thousand, that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. And the angels have charge, saying, 'Hurt not the earth till these are sealed in their forehead.'"

Fanny instinctively put her hand to her forehead. "Do you think they'll seal me?" she said.

"Yes," said Dred; "such as you are of the kingdom."

"Did the Spirit tell you that?" said Fanny, who felt some considerable anxiety.

"Yea, the Spirit hath shown me many such things," said Dred. "It hath also revealed to me the knowledge of the elements, the revolutions of the planets, the operations of the tide, and changes of the seasons."

Fanny looked doubtfully, and, taking up her basket of wild grapes, slowly moved off, thinking that she would ask Tiff about it.

At this moment there was a rustling in the branches of the oak-tree which overhung a part of the clearing near where Dred was lying, and Harry soon dropped from the branches on to the ground. Dred started up to receive him.

"How is it?" said he. "Will they come?"

"Yes; by midnight to-night they will be here. See here," he added, taking a letter from his pocket, "what I have received."

It was the letter which Clayton had written to Harry. It was remarkable, as Dred received it, how the wandering mystical expression of his face immediately gave place to one of shrewd and practical earnestness. He sat down on the ground, laid it on his knee, and followed the lines with his finger. Some passages he seemed to read over two or three times with the greatest attention, and he would pause,

after reading them, and sat with his eyes fixed gloomily on the ground. The last part seemed to agitate him strongly. He gave a sort of suppressed groan.

“Harry,” he said, turning to him, at last, “behold the day shall come when the Lord shall take out of our hand the cup of trembling, and put it into the hand of those that oppress us. Our soul is exceedingly filled now with the scorning of them that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud. The prophets prophesy falsely, the rulers bear rule by their means, and the people love to have it so. But what will it be in the end thereof? Their own wickedness shall reprove them, and their backsliding shall correct them. Listen to me, Harry,” he said, taking up his Bible, “and see what the Lord saith unto thee. ‘Thus saith the Lord my God, Feed the flock of the slaughter; whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty, and they that sell them say, blessed be the Lord, for I am rich. And their own shepherds pity them not. For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord. But, lo, I will deliver the men, every one into his neighbor’s hand, and into the hand of his king. And they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them. And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O ye poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves: the one I called beauty, and the other I called bands. And I fed the flock. And I took my staff, even beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people. And it was broken in that day, so the poor of the flock that waited on me knew it was the word of the Lord. Then I cut asunder mine other stave, even bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundations of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the people round about. Also in that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people.

All that burthen themselves with it shall be cut to pieces. In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and every rider with madness. And I will open mine eyes on the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness. In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf, and they shall devour all the people on the right and the left.'

"Harry," said he, "these things are written for our learning. We will go up and take away her battlements, for they are not the Lord's!"

The gloomy fervor with which Dred read these words of Scripture, selecting, as his eye glanced down the prophetic pages, passages whose images most affected his own mind, carried with it an overpowering mesmeric force.

Who shall say that, in this world, where all things are symbolic, bound together by mystical resemblances, and where one event is the archetype of thousands, that there is not an eternal significance in these old prophecies? Do they not bring with them "*springing and germinant* fulfillments" wherever there is a haughty and oppressive nation, and a flock of the slaughter"?

"Harry," said Dred, "I have fasted and prayed before the Lord, lying all night on my face, yet the token cometh not! Behold, there are prayers that resist me! The Lamb yet beareth, and the opening of the second seal delayeth! Yet the Lord had shown unto me that we should be up and doing, to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord! The Lord hath said unto me, 'Speak to the elders, and to the prudent men, and prepare their hearts.'"

"One thing," said Harry, "fills me with apprehension. Hark, that brought me this letter, was delayed in getting back; and I'm afraid that he'll get into trouble. Tom Gordon is raging like a fury over the people of our plantation. They have always been held under a very mild rule; and every one knows that a plantation so managed is not so immediately profitable as it can be made for a short time

by forcing everything up to the highest notch. He has got a man, there, for overseer — Old Hokum — that has been famous for his hardness and meanness ; and he has delivered the people, unreservedly, into his hands. He drinks, and frolics, and has his oyster-suppers, and swears he'll shoot any one that brings him a complaint. Hokum is to pay him so much yearly, and have to himself all that he makes over. Tom Gordon keeps two girls, there, that he bought for himself and his fellows, just as he wanted to keep my wife ! ”

“ Be patient, Harry ! This is a great christianizing institution ! ” said Dred, with a tone of grave irony.

“ I am afraid for Hark,” said Harry. “ He is the bravest of brave fellows. He is ready to do anything for us. But, if he is taken, there will be no mercy.”

Dred looked on the ground, gloomily. “ Hark was to be here to-night,” he said.

“ Yes,” said Harry, “ I wish we may see him.”

“ Harry,” said Dred, “ when they come, to-night, read them the Declaration of Independence of these United States, and then let each one judge of our afflictions, and the afflictions of their fathers, and the Lord shall be judge between us. I must go and seek counsel of the Lord.”

Dred rose, and, giving a leap from the ground, caught on the branch of the oak, which overhung their head, and, swinging himself on the limb, climbed in the thickness of the branches, and disappeared from view. Harry walked to the other side of the clearing, where his lodge had been erected. He found Lisette busy within. She ran to meet him, and threw her arms around his neck.

“ I am so glad you've come back, Harry ! It is so dreadful to think what may happen to you while you are gone ! Harry, I think we could be very happy here. See what a nice bed I have made in this corner, out of leaves and moss ! The women are both very kind, and I am glad we have got Old Tiff and the children here. It makes it seem more natural. See, I went out with them, this afternoon, and

how many grapes I have got! What have you been talking to that dreadful man about? Do you know, Harry, he makes me afraid? They say he is a prophet. Do you think he is?"

"I don't know, child," said Harry, abstractedly.

"Don't stay with him too much!" said Lisette. "He'll make you as gloomy as he is."

"Do I need any one to make me gloomy?" said Harry. "Am I not gloomy enough? Am I not an outcast? And you, too, Lisette?"

"It is n't so very dreadful to be an outcast," said Lisette. "God makes wild grapes for us, if we are outcasts."

"Yes, child," said Harry, "you are right."

"And the sun shines so pleasant, this afternoon!" said Lisette.

"Yes," said Harry; "but by and by cold storms and rain will come, and frosty weather!"

"Well," said Lisette, "then we will think what to do next. But don't let us lose this afternoon, and these grapes, at any rate."

CHAPTER XXII.

JEGAR SAHADUTHA.

AT twelve o'clock, that night, Harry rose from the side of his sleeping wife, and looked out into the darkness. The belt of forest which surrounded them seemed a girdle of impenetrable blackness. But above, where the tree-tops fringed out against the sky, the heavens were seen of a deep, transparent violet, blazing with stars. He opened the door, and came out. All was so intensely still that even the rustle of a leaf could be heard. He stood listening. A low whistle seemed to come from a distant part of the underwood. He answered it. Soon a crackling was heard, and a sound of cautious, suppressed conversation. In a few moments a rustling was heard in the boughs overhead. Harry stepped under.

"Who is there?" he said.

"The camp of the Lord's judgment!" was the answer, and a dark form dropped on the ground.

"Hannibal?" said Harry.

"Yes, Hannibal!" said the voice.

"Thank God!" said Harry.

But now the boughs of the tree were continually rustling, and one after another sprang down to the ground, each one of whom pronounced his name, as he came.

"Where is the prophet?" said one.

"He is not here," said Harry. "Fear not, he will be with us."

The party now proceeded to walk, talking in low voices.

"There's nobody from the Gordon place, yet!" said Harry, uneasily.

"They'll be along," said one of them. "Perhaps Hokum was wakeful, to-night. They'll give him the slip, though."

The company had now arrived at the lower portion of the clearing, where stood the blasted tree, which we formerly described, with its funeral-wreaths of moss. Over the grave which had recently been formed there Dred had piled a rude and ragged monument of stumps of trees, and tufts of moss, and leaves. In the top of one of the highest stumps was stuck a pine-knot, to which Harry now applied a light. It kindled, and rose with a broad, red, fuliginous glare, casting a sombre light on the circle of dark faces around. There were a dozen men, mulatto, quadroon, and negro. Their countenances all wore an expression of stern gravity and considerate solemnity.

Their first act was to clasp their hands in a circle, and join in a solemn oath never to betray each other. The moment this was done, Dred emerged mysteriously from the darkness, and stood among them.

"Brethren," he said, "this is the grave of your brother, whose wife they would take for a prey! Therefore he fled to the wilderness. But the assembly of the wicked compassed him about, and the dogs tore him, and licked up his blood, and here I buried him! Wherefore, this heap is called JEGAR SAHADUTHA! For the God of Abraham and Nahor, the God of their fathers, shall judge betwixt us. He that regardeth not the oath of brethren, and betrayeth counsel, let his arm fall from his shoulder-blade! Let his arm be broken from the bone! Behold, this heap shall be a witness unto you; for it hath heard all the words that ye have spoken!"

A deep-murmured "Amen" rose solemnly among them.

"Brethren," said Dred, laying his hand upon Harry, "the Lord caused Moses to become the son of Pharaoh's daughter, that he might become learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians, to lead forth his people from the house of

bondage. And, when he slew an Egyptian, he fled into the wilderness, where he abode certain days, till the time of the Lord was come. In like manner hath the Lord dealt with our brother. He shall expound unto you the laws of the Egyptians; and for me, I will show unto you what I have received from the Lord."

The circle now sat down on the graves which were scattered around, and Harry thus spoke:

"Brothers, how many of you have been at Fourth of July celebrations?"

"I have! I have! All of us!" was the deep response, uttered not eagerly, but in low and earnest tones.

"Brethren, I wish to explain to you to-night the story that they celebrate. It was years ago that this people was small, and poor, and despised, and governed by men sent by the King of England, who, they say, oppressed them. Then they resolved that they would be free, and govern themselves in their own way, and make their own laws. For this they were called rebels and conspirators; and, if they had failed, every one of their leaders would have been hung, and nothing more said about it. When they were agreeing to do this, they met together and signed a paper, which was to show to all the world the reason why. You have heard this read by them when the drums were beating and the banners flying. Now hear it here, while you sit on the graves of men they have murdered!"

And, standing by the light of the flaring torch, Harry read that document which has been fraught with so much seed for all time. What words were those to fall on the ears of thoughtful bondmen!

"Governments derive their just power from the consent of the governed." "When a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a determination to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their *right* and their *duty* to throw off such government."

"Brothers," said Harry, "you have heard the grievances which our masters thought sufficient to make it right for

them to shed blood. They rose up against their king, and when he sent his armies into the country, they fired at them from the windows of the houses, and from behind the barns, and from out of the trees, and wherever they passed, till they were strong enough to get together an army, and fight them openly."

"Yes," said Hannibal, "I heard my master's father tell of it. He was one of them."

"Now," said Harry, "the Lord judge between us and them, if the laws that they put upon us be not worse than any that lay upon them. They complained that they could not get justice done to them in the courts. But how stands it with us, who cannot even come into a court to plead?"

Harry then, in earnest and vehement language, narrated the abuse which had been inflicted upon Milly; and then recited, in a clear and solemn voice, that judicial decision which had burned itself into his memory, and which had confirmed and given full license to that despotic power. He related the fate of his own contract — of his services for years to the family for which he had labored, all ending in worse than nothing. And then he told his sister's history, till his voice was broken by sobs. The audience who sat around were profoundly solemn; only occasionally a deep, smothered groan seemed to rise from them involuntarily.

Hannibal rose. "I had a master in Virginny. He was a Methodist preacher. He sold my wife and two children to Orleans, and then sold me. My next wife was took for debt, and she's gone."

A quadroon young man rose. "My mother was held by a minister in Kentucky. My father was a good, hard-working man. There was a man set his eye on her, and wanted her; but she would n't have anything to do with him. Then she told her master, and begged him to protect her; but he sold her. Her hair turned all white in that year, and she went crazy. She was crazy till she died!"

"I's got a story to tell, on that," said a middle-aged negro man, of low stature, broad shoulders, and a countenance

indicative of great resolution, who now rose. "I's got a story to tell."

"Go on, Monday," said Harry.

"You spoke 'bout de laws. I's seen 'bout dem ar. Now, my brother Sam, he worked with me on de great Morton place, in Virginny. And dere was going to be a wedding dere, and dey wanted money, and so some of de colored people was sold to Tom Parker, 'cause Tom Parker he was a buying up round, dat ar fall; and he sold him to Souther, and he was one o' yer drefful mean white trash, dat lived down to de bush. Well, Sam was nigh 'bout starved, and so he had to help hissself de best way he could; and he used fur to trade off one ting and 'nother fur meal to Stone's store, and Souther he told him 'dat he'd give him hell if he caught him.' So, one day, when he missed something off de place, he come home and he brought Stone with him, and a man named Hearvy. He told him dat he was going to cotch it. I reckon dey was all three drunk. Any how, dey tied him up, and Souther he never stopped to cut him, and to slash him, and to hack him; and dey burned him with chunks from de fire, and dey scalded him with boiling water. He was strong man, but dey worked on him dat way all day, and at last he died. Dey hearn his screeches on all de places round. Now, brethren, you jest see what was done 'bout it. Why, mas'r and some of de gen'lemen round said dat Souther 'was n't fit to live,' and it should be brought in de courts; and sure 'nough it was; and, 'cause he is my own brother, I listened for what dey would say. Well, fust dey begun with saying dat it wan't no murder at all, 'cause slaves, dey said, wan't people, and dey could n't be murdered. But den de man on t' oder side he read heaps o' tings to show dat dey *was* people — dat dey *was* human critturs. Den de lawyer said dat dere wan't no evidence dat Souther meant fur to kill him, any how. Dat it was de right of de master to punish his slave any way he thought fit. And how was he going to know dat it would kill him? Well, so dey had it back and forth,

and finally de jury said 'it was murder in de second degree.' Lor! if dat ar 's being murdered in de second degree, I like to know what de fust is! You see, dey said he must go to de penitentiary for five years. But, laws, he did n't, 'cause dere 's ways enough o' getting out of dese yer tings; 'cause he took it up to de upper court, and dey said 'dat it had been settled dat dere could n't be noting done agin a mas'r fur no kind of beating or 'busing of der own slaves. Dat de master must be protected, even if 't was ever so cruel.'*

"So, now, brethren, what do you think of dat ar?"

At this moment another person entered the circle. There was a general start of surprise and apprehension, which immediately gave place to a movement of satisfaction and congratulation.

"You have come, have you, Henry?" said Harry.

But at this moment the other turned his face full to the torch-light, and Harry was struck with its ghastly expression.

"For God's sake, what 's the matter, Henry? Where 's Hark?"

"Dead!" said the other.

As one struck with a pistol-shot leaps in the air, Harry bounded, with a cry, from the ground.

"Dead?" he echoed.

"Yes, dead, at last! Dey's all last night a killing of him."

* Lest any of our readers should think the dark witness who is speaking mistaken in his hearing, we will quote here the words which stand on the Virginia law records, in reference to this very case.

"It has been decided by this court, in Turner's case, that the owner of a slave, for the *malicious, cruel, and excessive beating of his own slave, cannot be indicted.* * * It is the policy of the law in respect to the relation of master and slave, and for the sake of securing proper subordination and obedience on the part of the slave, to *protect the master from prosecution, even if the whipping and punishment be malicious, cruel, and excessive.*" — 7 Grattan, 673, 1851, *South-er vs. Commonwealth.*

Any one who has sufficiently strong nerves to peruse the records of this trial will see the effect of the slave system on the moral sensibilities of educated men.

“I thought so! O, I was afraid of it!” said Harry. “O, Hark! Hark! Hark! God do so to me, and more also, if I forget this!”

The thrill of a present interest drew every one around the narrator, who proceeded to tell how “Hark, having been too late on his return to the plantation, had incurred the suspicion of being in communication with Harry. How Hokum, Tom Gordon, and two of his drunken associates, had gathered together to examine him by scourging. How his shrieks the night before had chased sleep from every hut of the plantation. How he died, and gave no sign.” When he was through, there was dead and awful silence.

Dred, who had been sitting during most of these narrations, bowed, with his head between his knees, groaning within himself, like one who is wrestling with repressed feeling, now rose, and, solemnly laying his hand on the mound, said:

“*Jegar Sahadutha!* The God of their fathers judge between us! If they had a right to rise up for their oppressions, shall they condemn us? For judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off! Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter! Yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey! They are not ashamed, neither can they blush! They declare their sin as Sodom, and hide it not! The mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself! Therefore, forgive them not, saith the Lord!”

Dred paused a moment, and stood with his hands uplifted. As a thunder-cloud trembles and rolls, shaking with gathering electric fire, so his dark figure seemed to dilate and quiver with the force of mighty emotions. He seemed, at the moment, some awful form, framed to symbolize to human eye the energy of that avenging justice which all nature shudderingly declares.

He trembled, his hands quivered, drops of perspiration rolled down his face, his gloomy eyes dilated with an unutterable volume of emotion. At last the words heaved

themselves up in deep chest-tones, resembling the wild, hollow wail of a wounded lion, finding vent in language to him so familiar, that it rolled from his tongue in a spontaneous torrent, as if he had received their first inspiration.

“Hear ye the word of the Lord against this people ! The harvest groweth ripe ! The press is full ! The vats overflow ! Behold, saith the Lord — behold, saith the Lord, I will gather all nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them for my people, whom they have scattered among the nations ! Woe unto them, for they have cast lots for my people, and given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink ! For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof, saith the Lord ! Because they sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes ! They pant after the dust on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek ! And a man and his father will go in unto the same maid, to profane my holy name ! Behold, saith the Lord, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed full of sheaves !

“The burden of the beasts of the South ! The land of trouble and anguish, from whence cometh the young and old lion, the viper, and fiery, flying serpent ! Go write it upon a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for time to come, for ever and ever, that this is a rebellious people, lying children — children that will not hear the law of the Lord ! Which say to the seers, See not ! Prophecy not unto us right things ! Speak unto us smooth things ! Prophecy deceits ! Wherefore, thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise his word, and trust in oppression, and perverseness, and stay thereon ; therefore, this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly in an instant ! And he shall break it as the breaking of a potter’s vessel !”

Pausing for a moment, he stood with his hands tightly clasped before him, leaning forward, looking into the dis-

tance. At last, with the action and energy of one who beholds a triumphant reality, he broke forth :

“ Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments, from Bozrah ? This, that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength ? ”

He seemed to listen, and, as if he had caught an answer, he repeated :

“ I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save ! ”

“ Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-press ? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me ; for I will tread them in my anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled on my garments, and I will stain all my raiment ! For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come ! And I looked, and there was none to help ! And I wondered that there was none to uphold ! Therefore mine own arm brought salvation, and my fury it upheld me ! For I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury ! ”

Gradually the light faded from his face. His arms fell. He stood a few moments with his head bowed down on his breast. Yet the spell of his emotion held every one silent. At last, stretching out his hand, he broke forth in passionate prayer :

“ How long, O Lord, how long ? Awake ! Why sleepest thou, O Lord ? Why withdrawest thou thy hand ? Pluck it out of thy bosom ! We see not the sign ! There is no more any prophet, neither any among us, that knoweth how long ! Wilt thou hold thy peace forever ? Behold the blood of the poor crieth unto thee ! Behold how they hunt for our lives ! Behold how they pervert justice, and take away the key of knowledge ! They enter not in themselves, and those that are entering in they hinder ! Behold our wives taken for a prey ! Behold our daughters sold to be harlots ! Art thou a God that judgest on the earth ? Wilt thou not avenge thine own elect, that cry

unto thee day and night? Behold the scorning of them that are at ease, and the contempt of the proud! Behold how they speak wickedly concerning oppression! They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth! Wilt thou hold thy peace for all these things, and afflict us very sore?"

The energy of the emotion which had sustained him appeared gradually to have exhausted itself. And, after standing silent for a few moments, he seemed to gather himself together as a man awaking out of a trance, and, turning to the excited circle around him, he motioned them to sit down. When he spoke to them in his ordinary tone:

"Brethren," he said, "the vision is sealed up, and the token is not yet come! The Lamb still beareth the yoke of their iniquities; there be prayers in the golden censers which go up like a cloud! And there is silence in heaven for the space of half an hour! But hold yourselves in waiting, for the day cometh! And what shall be the end thereof?"

A deep voice answered Dred. It was that of Hannibal.

"We will reward them as they have rewarded us! In the cup that they have filled to us we will measure to them again!"

"God forbid," said Dred, "that the elect of the Lord should do that! When the Lord saith unto us, Smite, then will we smite! We will not torment them with the scourge and fire, nor defile their women, as they have done with ours! But we will slay them utterly, and consume them from off the face of the earth!"

At this moment the whole circle were startled by the sound of a voice which seemed to proceed deep in from among the trees, singing, in a wild and mournful tone, the familiar words of a hymn:

"Alas! and did my Saviour bleed,
And did my Sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a wretch as I?"

There was a dead silence as the voice approached still nearer, and the chorus was borne upon the night air :

“O, the Lamb, the loving Lamb,
The Lamb of Calvary !
The Lamb that was slain, but liveth again,
To intercede for me !”

And, as the last two lines were sung, Milly emerged and stood in the centre of the group. When Dred saw her, he gave a kind of groan, and said, putting his hand out before his face :

“Woman, thy prayers withstand me !”

“O, brethren,” said Milly, “I mistrusted of yer counsils, and I’s been praying de Lord for you. O, brethren, behold de Lamb of God ! If dere must come a day of vengeance, pray not to be in it ! It’s de Lord’s strange work. O, brethren, is we de fust dat’s been took to de judgment-seat ? dat’s been scourged, and died in torments ? O, brethren, who did it afore us ? Did n’t He hang bleeding three hours, when dey mocked Him, and gave Him vinegar ? Did n’t He sweat great drops o’ blood in de garden ?”

And Milly sang again, words so familiar to many of them that, involuntarily, several voices joined her :

“Agonizing in the garden,
On the ground your Maker lies ;
On the bloody tree behold Him,
Hear Him cry, before He dies,
It is finished ! Sinners, will not this suffice ?”

“O, won’t it suffice, brethren !” she said. “If de Lord could bear all dat, and love us yet, shan’t we ? O, brethren, dere’s a better way. I’s been whar you be. I’s been in de wilderness ! Yes, I’s heard de sound of dat ar trumpet ! O, brethren ! brethren ! dere was blackness and darkness dere ! But I’s come to Jesus, de Mediator of de new covenant, and de blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better tings than dat of Abel. Has n’t *I* suffered ? My heart has been broke over and over for every child de Lord give me !

And, when dey sold my poor Alfred, and shot him, and buried him like a dog, O, but did n't my heart burn? O, how I hated her dat sold him! I felt like I'd kill her! I felt like I'd be glad to see mischief come on her children! But, brethren, de Lord turned and looked upon me like he done on Peter. I saw him with de crown o' thorns on his head, bleeding, bleeding, and I broke down and forgave her. And de Lord turned her heart, and he was our peace. He broke down de middle wall 'tween us, and we come together, two poor sinners, to de foot of de cross. De Lord he judged her poor soul! She wan't let off from her sins. Her chil'en growed up to be a plague and a curse to her! Dey broke her heart! O, she was saved by fire—but, bress de Lord, she *was* saved! She died with her poor head on my arm—she dat had broke my heart! Wan't dat better dan if I'd killed her? O, brethren, pray de Lord to give 'em repentance! Leave de vengeance to him. Vengeance is mine—I will repay, saith de Lord. Like he loved us when we was enemies, love yer enemies!”

A dead silence followed this appeal. The key-note of another harmony had been struck. At last Dred rose up solemnly:

“Woman, thy prayers have prevailed for this time!” he said. “The hour is not yet come!”

CHAPTER XXIII.

FRANK RUSSEL'S OPINIONS.

CLAYTON was still pursuing the object which he had undertaken. He determined to petition the legislature to grant to the slave the right of seeking legal redress in cases of injury ; and, as a necessary step to this, the right of bearing testimony in legal action. As Frank Russel was candidate for the next state legislature, he visited him for the purpose of getting him to present such a petition.

Our readers will look in on the scene, in a small retired back room of Frank's office, where his bachelor establishment as yet was kept. Clayton had been giving him an earnest account of his plans and designs.

"The only safe way of gradual emancipation," said Clayton, "is the reforming of law ; and the beginning of all legal reform must of course be giving the slave legal personality. It's of no use to enact laws for his protection in his family state, or in any other condition, till we open to him an avenue through which, if they are violated, his grievances can be heard, and can be proved. A thousand laws for his comfort, without this, are only a dead letter."

"I know it," said Frank Russel ; "there never was anything under heaven so atrocious as our slave-code. It's a bottomless pit of oppression. Nobody knows it so well as we lawyers. But, then, Clayton, it's quite another thing what's to be done about it."

"Why, I think it's very plain what's to be done," said Clayton. "Go right forward and enlighten the com-

munity. Get the law reformed. That's what I have taken for my work; and, Frank, you must help me."

"Hum!" said Frank. "Now, the fact is, Clayton, if I wore a stiff white neckcloth, and had a *D.D.* to my name, I should tell you that the interests of Zion stood in the way, and that it was my duty to preserve my influence, for the sake of being able to take care of the Lord's affairs. But, as I am not so fortunate, I must just say, without further preface, that it won't do for me to compromise Frank Russel's interests. Clayton, I can't afford it — that's just it. It won't do. You see, our party can't take up that kind of thing. It would be just setting up a fort from which our enemies could fire on us at their leisure. If I go in to the legislature, I have to go in by my party. I have to represent my party, and, of course, I can't afford to do anything that will compromise them."

"Well, now, Frank," said Clayton, seriously and soberly, "are you going to put your neck into such a noose as this, to be led about all your life long — the bond-slave of a party?"

"Not I, by a good deal!" said Russel. "The noose will change ends, one of these days, and I'll drag the party. But we must all stoop to conquer, at first."

"And do you really propose nothing more to yourself than how to rise in the world?" said Clayton. "Isn't there any great and good work that has beauty for you? Isn't there anything in heroism and self-sacrifice?"

"Well," said Russel, after a short pause, "may be there is; but, after all, Clayton, is there? The world looks to me like a confounded humbug, a great hoax, and everybody is going in for grub; and, I say, hang it all, why should n't I have some of the grub, as well as the rest?"

"Man shall not live by bread alone!" said Clayton.

"Bread's a pretty good thing, though, after all," said Frank, shrugging his shoulders.

"But," said Clayton, "Frank, I am in earnest, and you've got to be. I want you to go with me down to the

depths of your soul, where the water is still, and talk to me on honor. This kind of half-joking way that you have is n't a good sign, Frank; it's too old for you. A man that makes a joke of everything at your age, what will he do before he is fifty? Now, Frank, you do know that this system of slavery, if we don't reform it, will eat out this country like a cancer."

"I know it," said Frank. "For that matter, it has eaten into us pretty well."

"Now," said Clayton, "if for nothing else, if we had no feeling of humanity for the slave, we must do something for the sake of the whites, for this is carrying us back into barbarism, as fast as we can go. Virginia has been ruined by it—run all down. North Carolina, I believe, has the enviable notoriety of being the most ignorant and poorest state in the Union. I don't believe there's any country in old, despotic Europe where the poor are more miserable, vicious, and degraded, than they are in our slave states. And it's depopulating us; our men of ability, in the lower classes, who want to be respectable, won't stand it. They will go off to some state where things *move on*. Hundreds and hundreds move out of North Carolina, every year, to the Western States. And it's all this unnatural organization of society that does it. We have got to contemplate some mode of abolishing this evil. We have got to take the first step towards progress, some time, or we ourselves are all undone."

"Clayton," said Frank, in a tone now quite as serious as his own, "I tell you, as a solemn fact, that we can't do it. Those among us who have got the power in their hands are determined to keep it, and they are wide awake. They don't mean to let the *first* step be taken, because they don't mean to lay down their power. The three fifths vote that they get by it is a thing they won't part with. They'll die first. Why, just look at it! There is at least twenty-four millions of property held in this way. What do you suppose these men care about the poor whites, and the ruin

of the state, and all that? The poor whites may go to the devil, for all them; and as for the ruin of the state, it won't come in *their* day; and 'after us the deluge,' you know. That's the talk! These men are our masters; they are yours; they are mine; they are masters of everybody in these United States. They can crack their whips over the head of any statesman or clergyman, from Maine to New Orleans, that disputes their will. They govern the country. Army, navy, treasury, church, state, everything is theirs; and whoever is going to get up must go up on their ladder. There is n't any other ladder. There is n't an interest, not a body of men, in these whole United States, that they can't control; and I tell you, Clayton, you might as well throw ashes into the teeth of the north wind, as undertake to fight their influence. Now, if there was any hope of doing any good by this, if there was the least prospect of succeeding, why, I'd join in with you; but there is n't. The thing is a fixed fact, and why should n't I climb up on it, as well as everybody else?"

"Nothing is fixed," said Clayton, "that is n't fixed in right. God and nature fight against evil."

"They do, I suppose; but it's a long campaign," said Frank, "and I must be on the side that will win while I'm alive. Now, Clayton, to you I always speak the truth; I won't humbug you. I worship *success*. I am of Frederick the Great's creed, 'that Providence goes with the strongest battalions.'

"I was n't made for defeat. I must have power. The preservation of this system, whole and entire, is to be the policy of the leaders of this generation. The fact is, they stand where it *must* be their policy. They *must* spread it over the whole territory. They *must* get the balance of power in the country, to build themselves up against the public opinion of mankind.

"Why, Clayton, moral sentiment, as you call it, is a humbug! The whole world acquiesces in *what goes*—they always have. There is a great outcry about slavery now;

but let it *succeed*, and there won't be. When they can out-vote the Northern States, they 'll put *them* down. They have kept them subservient by intrigue so far, and by and by they 'll have the strength to put them down by force. England makes a fuss now; but let them only succeed, and she 'll be civil as a sheep. Of course, men always make a fuss about injustice, when they have nothing to gain by holding their tongues; but England's mouth will be stopped with cotton—you 'll see it. They love trade, and hate war. And so the fuss of anti-slavery will die out in the world. Now, when you see what a poor hoax human nature is, what's the use of bothering? The whole race together are n't worth a button, Clayton, and self-sacrifice for such fools is a humbug. That's my programme!"

"Well, Frank, you have made a clean breast; so will I. The human race, as you say, may be a humbug, but it's every man's duty to know for himself that *he* is n't one. *I* am not. I do *not* worship success, and *will* not. And if a cause is a right and honorable one, I will labor in it till I die, whether there is any chance of succeeding or not."

"Well, now," said Frank Russel, "I dare say it's so. I respect your sort of folks; you form an agreeable heroic poem, with which one can amuse the tediousness of life. I suppose it won't do you any good to tell you that you are getting immensely unpopular, with what you are doing."

"No," said Clayton, "it won't."

"I am really afraid," said Russel, "that they 'll mob you, some of these bright days."

"Very well," said Clayton.

"O, of course, I knew it would be very well; but, say, Clayton, what do you want to get up a petition on *that* point for? Why don't you get up one to prevent the separation of families? There's been such a muss made about that in Europe, and all round the world, that it's rather the fashion to move about that a little. Politicians like to appear to intend to begin to do something about it. It has a pleasing effect, and gives the Northern editors and minis-

ters something to say, as an apology for our sins. Besides, there are a good many simple-hearted folks, who don't see very deep into things, that really think it possible to do something effective on this subject. If you get up a petition for that, you might take the tide with you; and I'd do something about it, myself."

"You know very well, Frank, for I told you, that it's no use to pass laws for that, without giving the slaves power to sue or give evidence, in case of violation. The improvement I propose touches the root of the matter."

"That's the fact—it surely does!" said Russel. "And, for that very reason, you'll never carry it. Now, Clayton, I just want to ask you one question. Can you fight? Will you fight? Will you wear a bowie-knife and pistol, and shoot every fellow down that comes at you?"

"Why, no, of course, Frank. You know that I never was a fighting man. Such brute ways are not to my taste."

"Then, my dear sir, you should n't set up for a reformer in Southern states. Now, I'll tell you one thing, Clayton, that I've heard. You made some remarks at a public meeting, up at E., that have started a mad-dog cry, which I suppose came from Tom Gordon. See here; have you noticed this article in the *Trumpet of Liberty*?" said he, looking over a confused stack of papers on his table. "Where's the article? O, here it is."

At the same time he handed Clayton a sheet bearing the motto "Liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable," and pointed to an article headed

"COVERT ABOLITIONISM! CITIZENS, BEWARE!"

"We were present, a few evenings ago, at the closing speech delivered before the Washington Agricultural Society, in the course of which the speaker, Mr. Edward Clayton, gratuitously wandered away from his subject to make inflammatory and seditious comments on the state of the laws which regulate our negro population. It is time for the friends of our institutions to be awake. Such remarks,

dropped in the ear of a restless and ignorant population, will be a fruitful source of sedition and insurrection. This young man is supposed to be infected with the virus of Northern abolitionists. We cannot too narrowly watch the course of such individuals; for the only price at which we can maintain liberty is eternal vigilance. Mr. Clayton belongs to one of our oldest and most respected families, which makes his conduct the more inexcusable."

Clayton perused this with a quiet smile, which was usual with him.

"The hand of Joab is in that thing," said Frank Russel.

"I'm sure I said very little," said Clayton. "I was only showing the advantage to our agriculture of a higher tone of moral feeling among our laborers, which, of course, led me to speak of the state of the law regulating them. I said nothing but what everybody knows."

"But, don't you know, Clayton," said Russel, "that if a fellow has an enemy—anybody bearing him the least ill-will—that he puts a tremendous power in his hands by making such remarks? Why, our common people are so ignorant that they are in the hands of anybody who wants to use them. They are just like a swarm of bees; you can manage them by beating on a tin-pan. And Tom Gordon has got the tin pan now, I fancy. Tom intends to be a swell. He is a born bully, and he'll lead a rabble. And so you must take care. Your family is considerable for you; but, after all, it won't stand you in stead for everything. Who have you got to back you? Who have you talked with?"

"Well," said Clayton, "I have talked with some of the ministry—"

"And, -of course," said Frank, "you found that the leadings of Providence did n't indicate that *they* are to be martyrs! You have their prayers *in secret*, I presume; and if you ever get the cause on the upper hill-side, they'll come out and preach a sermon for you. Now, Clayton, I'll

tell you what I'll do. If Tom Gordon attacks you, I'll pick a quarrel with him, and shoot him right off the reel. My stomach is n't nice about those matters, and that sort of thing won't compromise me with my party."

"Thank you," said Clayton, "I shall not trouble you."

"My dear fellow," said Russel, "you philosophers are very much mistaken about the use of carnal weapons. As long as you wrestle with flesh and blood, you had better use fleshly means. At any rate, a gentlemanly brace of pistols won't hurt you; and, in fact, Clayton, I am serious. You *must* wear pistols, — there are no two ways about it. Because, if these fellows know that a man wears pistols and will use them, it keeps them off. They have an objection to being shot, as this is all the world they are likely to have. And I think, Clayton, you can fire off a pistol in as edifying and dignified a manner, as you can say a grace on proper occasions. The fact is, before long there will be a row kicked up. I'm pretty sure of it. Tom Gordon is a deeper fellow than you'd think, and he has booked himself for Congress; and he means to go in on the thunder-and-blazes principle, which will give him the vote of all the rabble. He'll go into Congress to do the fighting and slashing. There always must be a bully or two there, you know, to knock down fellows that you can't settle any other way. And nothing would suit him better, to get his name up, than heading a crusade against an abolitionist."

"Well," said Clayton, "if it's come to that, that we can't speak and discuss freely in our own state, where are we?"

"Where are we, my dear fellow? Why, I know where we are; and if you don't, it's time you did. Discuss freely? Certainly we can, on *one* side of the question; or on both sides of any other question than this. But this you can't discuss freely, and they can't afford to let you, as long as they mean to keep their power. Do you suppose they are going to let these poor devils, whites, get their bandages off their eyes, that make them so easy to lead now? There

would be a pretty bill to pay, if they did ! Just now, these fellows are in as safe and comfortable a condition for use as a party could desire ; because they have got votes, and we have the guiding of them. And they rage, and swear, and tear, for our institutions, because they are fools, and don't know what hurts them. Then, there 's the niggers. Those fellows are deep. They have as long ears as little pitchers, and they are such a sort of fussy set, that whatever is going on in the community is always in their mouths, and so comes up that old fear of insurrection. That 's the awful word, Clayton ! *That* lies at the bottom of a good many things in our state, more than we choose to let on. These negroes are a black well ; you never know what 's at the bottom."

" Well," said Clayton, " the only way, the only safeguard to prevent this is reform. They are a patient set, and will bear a great while ; and if they only see that anything is being done, it will be an effectual prevention. If you want insurrection, the only way is to shut down the escape-valve ; for, will ye nill ye, the steam must rise. You see, in this day, minds *will grow*. They *are* growing. There 's no help for it, and there 's no force like the force of growth. I have seen a rock split in two by the growing of an elm-tree that wanted light and air, and would make its way up through it. Look at all the aristocracies of Europe. They have gone down under this force. Only one has stood — that of England. And how came that to stand ? Because it knew when to *yield* ; because it never confined discussion ; because it gave way gracefully before the growing force of the people. That 's the reason it stands to-day, while the aristocracy of France has been blown to atoms."

" My dear fellow," said Russel, " this is all very true and convincing, no doubt ; but you won't make *our* aristocracy believe it. They have mounted the lightning, and they are going to ride it whip and spur. They are going to annex Cuba and the Sandwich Islands, and the Lord knows what, and have a great and splendid slaveholding empire. And

the North is going to be what Greece was to Rome. We shall govern it, and it will attend to the arts of life for us. The South understands governing. We are trained to rule from the cradle. We have leisure to rule. We have nothing else to do. The free states have their factories, and their warehouses, and their schools, and their internal improvements, to take up their minds; and, if we are careful, and don't tell them too plain where we are taking them, they 'll never know it till they get there."

"Well," said Clayton, "there's one element of force that you've left out in your calculation."

"And what's that?" said Russel.

"God," said Clayton.

"I don't know anything about him," said Russel.

"You may have occasion to learn, one of these days," said Clayton. "I believe he is alive yet."

CHAPTER XXIV.

TOM GORDON'S PLANS.

TOM GORDON, in the mean while, had commenced ruling his paternal plantation in a manner very different from the former indulgent system. His habits of reckless and boundless extravagance, and utter heedlessness, caused his cravings for money to be absolutely insatiable; and, within legal limits, he had as little care how it was come by, as a highway robber. It is to be remarked that Tom Gordon was as a worse slaveholder and master from the very facts of certain desirable qualities in his mental constitution; for, as good wine makes the strongest vinegar, so fine natures perverted make the worse vice. Tom had naturally a perfectly clear, perceptive mind, and an energetic, prompt temperament. It was impossible for him, as many do, to sophisticate and delude himself with false views. He marched up to evil boldly, and with his eyes open. He had very little regard for public opinion, particularly the opinion of conscientious and scrupulous people. So he carried his purposes, it was very little matter to him what any one thought of them or him; they might complain till they were tired.

After Clayton had left the place, he often pondered the dying words of Nina, "that he should care for her people; that he should tell Tom to be kind to them." There was such an impassable gulf between the two characters, that it seemed impossible that any peaceable communication should pass between them. Clayton thought within himself that it was utterly hopeless to expect any good arising

from the sending of Nina's last message. But the subject haunted him. Had he any right to withhold it? Was it not his duty to try every measure, however apparently hopeless?

Under the impulse of this feeling, he one day sat down and wrote to Tom Gordon an account, worded with the utmost simplicity, of the last hours of his sister's life, hoping that he might read it, and thus, if nothing more, his own conscience be absolved.

Death and the grave, it is true, have sacred prerogatives, and it is often in their power to awaken a love which did not appear in life. There are few so hard as not to be touched by the record of the last hours of those with whom they have stood in intimate relations. A great moralist says, "There are few things not purely evil of which we can say, without emotion, this is the last."

The letter was brought to Tom Gordon one evening when, for a wonder, he was by himself; his associates being off on an excursion, while he was detained at home by a temporary illness. He read it over, therefore, with some attention. He was of too positive a character, however, too keenly percipient, not to feel immediate pain in view of it. A man of another nature might have melted in tears over it, indulged in the luxury of sentimental grief, and derived some comfort, from the exercise, to go on in ways of sin. Not so with Tom Gordon. He could not afford to indulge in anything that roused his moral nature. He was doing wrong of set purpose, with defiant energy; and his only way of keeping his conscience quiet was to maintain about him such a constant tumult of excitement as should drown reflection. He could not afford a tête-à-tête conversation with his conscience;—having resolved, once for all, to go on in his own wicked way, serving the flesh and the devil, he had to watch against anything that might occasion uncomfortable conflict in his mind. He knew very well, lost man as he was, that there was something sweet and pure, high and noble, against which he

was contending ; and the letter was only like a torch, which a fair angel might hold up, shining into the filthy lair of a demon. He could not bear the light ; and he had no sooner read the note, than he cast it into the fire, and rang violently for a hot brandy-toddy, and a fresh case of cigars. The devil's last, best artifice to rivet the fetters of his captives is the opportunity which these stimulants give them to command insanity at will.

Tom Gordon was taken to bed drunk ; and, if a sorrowful guardian spirit hovered over him as he read the letter, he did not hear the dejected rustle of its retreating wings. The next day nothing was left, only a more decided antipathy to Clayton, for having occasioned him so disagreeable a sensation.

Tom Gordon, on the whole, was not unpopular in his vicinity. He determined to rule them all, and he did. All that uncertain, uninstructed, vagrant population, which abound in slave states, were at his nod and beck. They were his tools — prompt to aid him in any of his purposes, and convenient to execute vengeance on his adversaries. Tom was a determined slaveholder. He had ability enough to see the whole bearings of that subject, from the beginning to the end ; and he was determined that, while he lived, the first stone should never be pulled from the edifice in his state. He was a formidable adversary, because what he wanted in cultivation he made up in unscrupulous energy ; and, where he might have failed in argument, he could conquer by the cudgel and the bludgeon. He was, as Frank Russel had supposed, the author of the paragraph which had appeared in the *Trumpet of Freedom*, which had already had its effect in awakening public suspicion.

But what stung him to frenzy, when he thought of it, was, that every effort which he had hitherto made to recover possession of Harry had failed. In vain he had sent out hunters and dogs. The swamp had been tracked in vain. He boiled and burned with fierce tides of passion, as he thought of him in his security defying his power.

Some vague rumors had fallen upon his ear of the existence, in the swamp, of a negro conspirator, of great energy and power, whose lair had never yet been discovered ; and he determined that he would raise heaven and earth to find him. He began to suspect that there was, somehow, understanding and communication between Harry and those who were left on the plantation, and he determined to detect it. This led to the scene of cruelty and tyranny to which we made allusion in a former chapter. The mangled body was buried, and Tom felt neither remorse nor shame. Why should he, protected by the express words of legal decision ? He had only met with an accident in the exercise of his lawful power on a slave in the act of rebellion.

"The fact is, Kite," he said, to his boon-companion, Theophilus Kite, as they were one day sitting together, "I'm bound to have that fellow. I'm going to publish a proclamation of outlawry, and offer a reward for his head. That will bring it in, I'm thinking. I'll put it up to a handsome figure, for that will be better than nothing."

"Pity you could n't catch him alive," said Kite, "and make an example of him !"

"I know it," said Tom. "I'd take him the long way round, that I would ! That fellow has been an eye-sore to me ever since I was a boy. I believe all the devils that are in me are up about him."

"Tom," said Kite, "you've got the devil in you — no mistake !"

"To be sure I have," said Tom. "I only want a chance to express him. I wish I could get hold of the fellow's wife ! I could make him wince there, I guess. I'll get her, too, one of these days ! But, now, Kite, I'll tell you, the fact is, somebody round here is in league with him. They know about him, I know they do. There's that squeaky, leathery, long-nosed Skinflint, trades with the niggers in the swamp — I know he does ! But he is a double-and-twisted liar, and you can't get anything out of him. One of these days I'll burn up that old den of his, and

shoot him, if he don't look out! Jim Stokes told me that he slept down there, one night, when he was tracking, and that he heard Skinflint talking with somebody between twelve and one o'clock; and he looked out, and saw him selling powder to a nigger."

"O, that could n't be Harry," said Kite.

"No, but it's one of the gang that he is in with. And, then, there's that Hark. Jim says that he saw him talking, —giving a letter, that he got out of the post-office, to a man that rode off towards the woods. I thought we'd have the truth out of his old hide! But he didn't hold out as I thought he would."

"Hokum don't understand his business," said Kite. "He should n't have used him up so fast."

"Hokum is a bother," said Tom, "like all the rest of those fellows! Hark was a desperately-resolute fellow, and it's well enough he is dead, because he was getting sullen, and making the others rebellious. Hokum, you see, had taken a fancy to his wife, and Hark was jealous."

"Quite a romance!" said Kite, laughing.

"And now I'll tell you another thing," said Tom, "that I'm bound to reform. There's a canting, sneaking, dribbling, whining old priest, that's ravaging these parts, and getting up a muss among people about the abuses of the slaves; and I'm not going to have it. I'm going to shut up his mouth. I shall inform him, pretty succinctly, that, if he does much more in this region, he'll be illustrated with a coat of tar-and-feathers."

"Good for you!" said Kite.

"Now," said Tom, "I understand that to-night he is going to have a general snivelling season in the old log church, out on the cross run, and they are going to form a church on anti-slavery principles. Contemptible whelps! Not a copper to bless themselves with! Dirty, sweaty, greasy mechanics, with their spawn of children! Think of the impudence of their getting together and passing anti-slavery resolutions, and resolving they won't admit slave-

holders to the communion! I have a great mind to let them try the dodge, once! By George, if I wouldn't walk up and take their bread and wine, and pitch it to thunder!"

"Are they really going to form such a church?"

"That's the talk," said Tom. "But they'll find they have reckoned without their host, I fancy! You see, I just tipped Jim Stokes the wink. Says I, Jim, don't you think they'll want you to help the music there, to-night? Jim took at once; and he said he would be on the ground with a dog or two, and some old tin pans. O, we shall get them up an orchestra, I promise you! And some of our set are going over to see the fun. There's Bill Akers, and Bob Story, and Sim Dexter, will be over here to dinner, and towards evening we'll ride over."

CHAPTER XXV..

LYNCH LAW.

THE rays of the afternoon sun were shining through the fringy needles of the pines. The sound of the woodpecker reverberated through the stillness of the forest, answering to thousand woodland notes. Suddenly, along the distant path, a voice is heard singing, and the sound comes strangely on the ear through the dreamy stillness :

“ Jesus Christ has lived and died —
What is all the world beside ?
This to know is all I need,
This to know is life indeed.
Other wisdom seek I none —
Teach me this, and this alone :
Christ for me has lived and died,
Christ for me was crucified.”

And, as the last lines fall upon the ear, a figure, riding slowly on horseback, comes round the bend of the forest path. It is father Dickson. It was the habit of this good man, much of whose life was spent in solitary journeyings, to use the forest arches for that purpose for which they seemed so well designed, as a great cathedral of prayer and praise. He was riding with the reins loose over the horse's neck, and a pocket-Bible in his hand. Occasionally he broke out into snatches of song, like the one which we heard him singing a few moments ago. As he rides along now, he seems absorbed in mental prayer. Father Dickson, in truth, had cause to pray. The plainness of speech which he felt bound to use had drawn down upon him opposition

and opprobrium, and alienated some of his best friends. The support which many had been willing to contribute to his poverty was entirely withdrawn. His wife, in feeble health, was toiling daily beyond her strength; and hunger had looked in at the door, but each day prayer had driven it away. The petition, "Give us THIS DAY our daily bread," had not yet failed to bring an answer; but there was no bread for to-morrow. Many friendly advisers had told him that, if he would relinquish a futile and useless undertaking, he should have enough and to spare. He had been conferred with by the elders in a vacant church, in the town of E., who said to him, "We enjoy your preaching when you let alone controverted topics; and if you'll agree to confine yourself solely to the Gospel, and say nothing on any of the delicate and exciting subjects of the day, we shall rejoice in your ministrations." They pleaded with him his poverty, and the poor health of his wife, and the necessities of his children; but he answered, "'Man shall not live by bread alone.' God is able to feed me, and he will do it." They went away, saying that he was a fool, that he was crazy. He was not the first whose brethren had said, "He is beside himself."

As he rode along through the forest paths, he talked of his wants to his Master. "Thou knowest," he said, "how I suffer. Thou knowest how feeble my poor wife is, and how it distresses us both to have our children grow up without education. We cast ourselves on thee. Let us not deny thee; let us not betray thee. Thou hadst not where to lay thy head; let us not murmur. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord." And then he sang:

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou my all henceforth shalt be!
Let the world despise and leave me —
They have left my Saviour too;

Human looks and words deceive me —
Thou art not, like them, untrue !
And, while thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, power, and might,
Foes may hate, and friends disown me,
Show thy face and all is bright ! ”

And, as he sang and prayed, that strange joy arose within him which, like the sweetness of night flowers, is born of darkness and tribulation. The soul hath in it somewhat of the divine, in that it can have joy in endurance beyond the joy of indulgence.

They mistake who suppose that the highest happiness lies in wishes accomplished — in prosperity, wealth, favor, and success. There has been a joy in dungeons and on racks passing the joy of harvest. A joy strange and solemn, mysterious even to its possessor. A white stone dropped from that signet-ring, peace, which a dying Saviour took from his own bosom, and bequeathed to those who endure the cross, despising the shame.

As father Dickson rode on, he lifted his voice, in solemn exultation :

“ Soul, then know thy full salvation ;
Rise o’er fear, doubt, and care ;
Joy to find, in every station,
Something still to do or bear.
Think what spirit dwells within thee ;
Think what Father’s smiles are thine ;
Think that Jesus died to win thee ;
Child of heaven, wilt thou repine ?

At this moment Dr. Cushing, in the abundant comforts of his home, might have envied father Dickson in his desertion and poverty. For that peace seldom visited him. He struggled wearily along the ways of duty, never fulfilling his highest ideal ; wearied by confusing accusations of conscience, and deeming himself happy only because, having never lived in any other state, he knew not what happiness was like. He alternately condemned his brother’s

rashness, and sighed as he thought of his uncompromising spirituality ; and once or twice he had written him a friendly letter of caution, enclosing him a five-dollar bill, wishing that he might succeed, begging that he would be careful, and ending with the pious wish that we might all be guided aright ; which supplication, in many cases, answers the purpose, in a man's inner legislation, of laying troublesome propositions on the table. Meanwhile the shades of evening drew on, and father Dickson approached the rude church which stood deep in the shadow of the woods. In external appearance it had not the pretensions even of a New England barn, but still it had echoed prayers and praises from humble, sincere worshippers. As father Dickson rode up to the door, he was surprised to find quite a throng of men, armed with bludgeons and pistols, waiting before it. One of these now stepped forward, and, handing him a letter, said,

“Here, I have a letter for you to read !”

Father Dickson put it calmly in his pocket. “I will read it after service,” said he.

The man then laid hold of his bridle. “Come out here !” he said ; “I want to talk to you.”

“Thank you, friend, I will talk with you after meeting,” said he. “It's time for me to begin service.”

“The fact is,” said a surly, wolfish-looking fellow, who came behind the first speaker, “the fact is, we an't going to have any of your d——d abolition meetings here ! If he can't get it out, I can !”

“Friends,” said father Dickson, mildly, “by what right do you presume to stop me ?”

“We think,” said the first man, “that you are doing harm, violating the laws —”

“Have you any warrant from the civil authorities to stop me ?”

“No, sir,” said the first speaker ; but the second one, ejecting a large quid of tobacco from his mouth, took up the explanation in a style and taste peculiarly his own.

"Now, old cock, you may as well know fust as last, that we don't care a cuss for the civil authorities, as you call them, 'cause we's going to do what we darn please; and we don't please have you yowping abolishment round here, and putting deviltry in the heads of our niggers! Now, that ar's plain talk!"

This speech was chorused by a group of men on the steps, who now began to gather round and shout,

"Give it to him! That's into him! make the wool fly!"

Father Dickson, who was perfectly calm, now remarked in the shadow of the wood, at no great distance, three or four young men mounted on horses, who laughed brutally, and called out to the speaker,

"Give him some more!"

"My friends," said father Dickson, "I came here to perform a duty, at the call of my heavenly Master, and you have no right to stop me."

"Well, how will you help yourself, old bird? Supposing we have n't?"

"Remember, my friends, that we shall all stand side by side at the judgment seat to give an account for this night's transactions. How will you answer for it to God?"

A loud, sneering laugh came from the group under the trees, and a voice, which we recognize as Tom Gordon's, calls out,

"He is coming the solemn dodge on you, boys! Get on your long faces!"

"Come," said the roughest of the speakers, "this here don't go down with us! We don't know nothing about no judgments; and as to God, we an't none of us seen him, lately. We 'spect he don't travel round these parts."

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good," said father Dickson.

Here one in the mob mewed like a cat, another barked like a dog, and the spectators under the tree laughed more loudly than ever.

"I say," said the first speaker, "you shan't go to get-

ting up rat-traps and calling 'em meetings ! This yer preaching o' yourn is a cussed sell, and we won't stand it no longer ! We shall have an insurrection among our niggers. Pretty business, getting up churches where you won't have slaveholders commune ! I's got niggers myself, and I know I's bigger slave than they be, and I wished I was shet of them ! But I an't going to have no d——d old parson dictating to me about my affairs ! And we won't, none of the rest of us, will we ? 'Cause them that an't got niggers now means to have. Don't we boys ? ”

“ Ay, ay, that we do ! Give it to him ! ” was shouted from the party.

“ It's our right to have niggers, and we will have them, if we can get them, ” continued the speaker.

“ Who gave you the right ? ” said father Dickson.

“ Who gave it ? Why, the constitution of the United States, to be sure, man ! Who did you suppose ? An't we got the freest government in the world ? Is we going to be shut out of communion, 'cause we holds niggers ? Don't care a cuss for your old communion, but it's the *principle* I's going for ! Now, I tell you what, old fellow, we've got you ; and you have got to promise, right off the reel, that you won't say another word on this yer subject. ”

“ Friend, I shall make no such promise, ” said father Dickson, in a tone so mild and steadfast that there was a momentary pause.

“ You 'd better, ” said a man in the crowd, “ if you know what's good for you ! ”

A voice now spoke from the circle of the young men,

“ Never cave in, boys ! ”

“ No fear of us ! ” responded the man who had taken the most prominent part in the dialogue hitherto. “ We'll serve it out to him ! Now, ye see, old feller, ye're treed, and may as well come down, as the coon said to Davy. You can't help yourself, 'cause we are ten to one ; and if you don't promise peaceable, we'll make you ! ”

“ My friends, ” said father Dickson, “ I want you to think

what you are doing. Your good sense must teach you the impropriety of your course. You know that you are doing wrong. You know that it is n't right to trample on all law, both human and divine, out of professed love to it. You must see that your course will lead to perfect anarchy and confusion. The time may come when your opinions will be as unpopular as mine."

"Well, what then?"

"Why, if your course prevails, you must be lynched, stoned, tarred and feathered. This is a two-edged sword you are using, and some day you may find the edge turned towards you. You may be seized, just as you are seizing me. You know the men that threw Daniel into the den got thrown in themselves."

"Daniel who?" shouted one of the company; and the young men under the tree laughed insultingly.

"Why are you afraid to let me preach, this evening?" said father Dickson. "Why can't you hear me, and, if I say anything false, why can't you show me the falsehood of it? It seems to me it's a weak cause that can only get along by stopping men's mouths."

"No, no — we an't going to have it!" said the man who had taken the most active part. "And now you've got to sign a solemn promise, this night, that you won't ever open your mouth again about this yer subject, or we'll make it worse for you!"

"I shall never make such a promise. You need not think to terrify me into it, for I am not afraid. You must kill me before you can stop me."

"D——n you, then, old man," said one of the young men, riding up by the side of him, "I'll tell you what you shall do! You shall sign a pledge to leave North Carolina in three days, and never come back again, and take your whole spawn and litter with you, or you shall be chastised for your impudence! Now, look out, sir, for you are speaking to your betters! Your insolence is intolerable! What business have you passing strictures reflecting on the con-

duct of gentlemen of family? Think yourself happy that we let you go out of the state without the punishment that your impudence deserves!"

"Mr. Gordon, I am sorry to hear you speaking in that way," said father Dickson, composedly. "By right of your family, you certainly ought to know how to speak as a gentleman. You are holding language to me that you have no right to hold, and uttering threats that you have no means of enforcing."

"You'll see if I have n't!" replied the other, with an oath. "Here, boys!"

He beckoned one or two of the leaders to his side, and spoke with them in a low voice. One of them seemed inclined to remonstrate.

"No, no — it's too bad!" he said.

But the others said,

"Yes, it serves him right! We'll do it! Hurra, boys! We'll help on the parson home, and help him kindle his fire!"

There was a general shout, as the whole party, striking up a ribald song, seized father Dickson's horse, turned him round, and began marching in the direction of his cabin in the woods.

Tom Gordon and his companions, who rode foremost, filled the air with blasphemous and obscene songs, which entirely drowned the voice of father Dickson whenever he attempted to make himself heard. Before they started, Tom Gordon had distributed freely of whiskey among them, so that what little manliness there might have been within seemed to be "set on fire of hell." It was one of those moments that try men's souls.

Father Dickson, as he was hurried along, thought of that other *one*, who was led by an infuriate mob through the streets of Jerusalem, and he lifted his heart in prayer to the Apostle and High Priest of his profession, the God in Jesus. When they arrived before his little cabin, he made one more effort to arrest their attention.

"My brethren," he said.

"None of your brethren! Stop that cant!" said Tom Gordon.

"Hear me one word," said father Dickson. "My wife is quite feeble. I'm sure you would n't wish to hurt a sick woman, who never did harm to any mortal creature."

"Well, then," said Tom Gordon, facing round to him, "if you care so very much about your wife, you can very easily save her any further trouble. Just give us the promise we want, and we'll go away peaceably, and leave you. But, if you won't, as true as there is a God in heaven, we'll pull down every stick of timber in your old kennel! I'll tell you what, old man, you've got a master to deal with, now!"

"I cannot promise not to preach upon this subject."

"Well, then, you must promise to take yourself out of the state. You can go among your Northern brethren, and howl and mawl round there; but we are not going to have you here. I have as much respect for respectable ministers of the Gospel as any one, when they confine themselves to the duties of their calling; but, when they come down to be intriguing in our worldly affairs, they must expect to be treated as we treat other folks that do that. Their black coats shan't protect them! We are not going to be priest-ridden, are we, boys?"

A loud whoop of inflamed and drunken merriment chorused this question. Just at this moment the door of the cottage was opened, and a pale, sickly-looking woman came gliding out to the gate.

"My dear," she said, and her voice was perfectly calm, "don't yield a hair's breadth, on my account. I can bear as well as you. I am not afraid. I am ready to die for conscience' sake. Gentlemen," she said, "there is not much in this house of any value, except two sick children. If it is agreeable to you to pull it down, you can do it. Our goods are hardly worth spoiling, but you can spoil them. My husband, be firm; don't yield an inch!"

It is one of the worst curses of slavery that it effaces

from the breast all manly feeling with regard to woman. Every one remembers the story how the frail and delicate wife of Lovejoy placed her weakness as a shield before the chamber door where her husband was secreted, and was fought with brutal oaths and abuse by the drunken gang, who were determined to pass over her body, if necessary, to his heart! They who are trained to whip women in a servile position, of course can have none of the respect which a free man feels for woman as woman. They respect the sex when they see it enshrined by fashion, wealth, and power; but they tread it in the dust when in poverty and helplessness it stands in the path of their purposes.

"Woman," said Tom Gordon, "you are a fool! You need n't think to come it round us with any of that talk! You need n't think we are going to stop on your account, for we shan't! We know what we are about."

"So does God!" said the woman, fixing her eye on him with one of those sudden looks of power with which a noble sentiment sometimes lights up for a moment the weakest form.

There was a momentary pause, and then Tom broke out into oaths and curses.

"I'll tell you what, boys," he said, "we had better bring matters to a point! Here, tie him up to this tree, and give him six-and-thirty! He is so dreadful fond of the niggers, let him fare with them! We know how to get a promise out of him!"

The tiger was now fully awake in the crowd. Wild oaths and cries of "Give it to him! Give it to him, G—d——n him!" arose.

Father Dickson stood calm; and, beholding him, they saw his face as if it had been that of an angel, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. A few moments more, and he was divested of his outer garments, and bound to a tree.

"Now will you promise?" said Tom Gordon, taking out his watch. "I give you five minutes."

The children, now aroused, were looking out, crying, from

the door. His wife walked out and took her place before him.

"Stand out of the way, old woman!" said Tom Gordon.

"I will not stand out of the way!" she said, throwing her arms round her husband. "You shall not get to him but over my body!"

"Ben Hyatt, take her away!" said Tom Gordon. "Treat her decently, as long as she behaves herself."

A man forced her away. She fell fainting on his shoulder.

"Lay her down," said Tom Gordon. "Now, sir, your five minutes are up. What have you got to say?"

"I have to say that I shall not comply with your demands."

"Very well," said Tom, "it's best to be explicit."

He drew his horse a little back, and said to a man who was holding a slave-whip behind,

"Give it to him!"

The blows descended. He uttered no sound. The mob, meanwhile, tauntingly insulted him.

"How do you like it? What do you think of it? Preach us a sermon, now, can't you? Come, where's your text?"

"He is getting stars and stripes, now!" said one.

"I reckon he'll see stars!" said another.

"Stop," said Tom Gordon. "Well, my friend," he said, "you see we are in earnest, and we shall carry this through to the bitter end, you may rely on it. You won't get any sympathy; you won't get any support. There an't a minister in the state that will stand by you. They all have sense enough to let our affairs alone. They'd any of them hold a candle here, as the good elder did when they thrashed Dresser, down at Nashville. Come, now, will you cave in?"

But at this moment the conversation was interrupted by the riding up of four or five gentlemen on horseback, the headmost of whom was Clayton.

"What's this?" he exclaimed, hurriedly. "What, Mr.

Gordon — father Dickson! What — what am I to understand by this?"

"Who the devil cares what you understand? It's no business of yours," said Tom Gordon; "so stand out of my way!"

"I shall make it some of my business," said Clayton, turning round to one of his companions. "Mr. Brown, you are a magistrate?"

Mr. Brown, a florid, puffy-looking old gentleman, now rode forward.

"Bless my soul, but this is shocking! Mr. Gordon, don't! how can you? My boys, you ought to consider!"

Clayton, meanwhile, had thrown himself off his horse, and cut the cords which bound father Dickson to the tree. The sudden reaction of feeling overcame him. He fell, fainting.

"Are you not ashamed of yourselves?" said Clayton, indignantly glancing round. "Isn't this pretty business for great, strong men like you, abusing ministers that you know won't fight, and women and children that you know can't!"

"Do you mean to apply that language to me?" said Tom Gordon.

"Yes, sir, I do mean just that!" said Clayton, looking at him, while he stretched his tall figure to its utmost height.

"Sir, that remark demands satisfaction."

"You are welcome to all the satisfaction you can get," said Clayton, coolly.

"You shall meet me," said Tom Gordon, "where you shall answer for that remark!"

"I am not a fighting man," said Clayton; "but, if I were, I should never consent to meet any one but my equals. When a man stoops to do the work of a rowdy and a bully, he falls out of the sphere of gentlemen. As for you," said Clayton, turning to the rest of the company, "there's more apology for you. You have not been brought up to know better. Take my advice; disperse yourselves now, or I shall take means to have this outrage brought to justice."

There is often a magnetic force in the appearance, amid an excited mob, of a man of commanding presence, who seems perfectly calm and decided. The mob stood irresolute.

"Come, Tom," said Kite, pulling him by the sleeve, "we've given him enough, at any rate."

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Brown, "Mr. Gordon, I advise you to go home. We must all keep the peace, you know. Come, boys, you've done enough for one night, I should hope! Go home, now, and let the old man be; and there's something to buy you a treat, down at Skinflint's. Come, do the handsome, now!"

Tom Gordon sullenly rode away, with his two associates each side; but, before he went, he said to Clayton,

"You shall hear of me again, one of these days!"

"As you please," said Clayton.

The party now set themselves about recovering and comforting the frightened family. The wife was carried in and laid down on the bed. Father Dickson was soon restored so as to be able to sit up, and, being generally known and respected by the company, received many expressions of sympathy and condolence. One of the men was an elder in the church which had desired his ministerial services. He thought this a good opportunity of enforcing some of his formerly expressed opinions.

"Now, father Dickson," he said, "this just shows you the truth of what I was telling you. This course of yours won't do; you see it won't, now. Now, if you'd agree not to say anything of these troublesome matters, and just confine yourself to the preaching of the Gospel, you see you would n't get into any more trouble; and, after all, it's the Gospel that's the root of the matter. The Gospel will gradually correct all these evils, if you don't say anything about them. You see, the state of the community is peculiar. They won't bear it. We feel the evils of slavery just as much as you do. Our souls are burdened under it," he said, complacently wiping his face with his handkerchief.

“But Providence does n’t appear to open any door here for us to do anything. I think we ought to abide on the patient waiting on the Lord, who, in his own good time, will bring light out of darkness, and order out of confusion.”

This last phrase being a part of a stereotyped exhortation with which the good elder was wont to indulge his brethren in church prayer-meetings, he delivered it in the sleepy drawl which he reserved for such occasions.

“Well,” said father Dickson, “I must say that I don’t see that the preaching of the Gospel, in the way we have preached it hitherto, has done anything to rectify the evil. It’s a bad sign if our preaching does n’t make a conflict. When the apostles came to a place, they said, ‘These men that turn the world upside down are come hither.’”

“But,” said Mr. Brown, “you must consider our institutions are peculiar; our negroes are ignorant and inflammable, easily wrought upon, and the most frightful consequences may result. That’s the reason why there is so much sensation when any discussion is begun which relates to them. Now, I was in Nashville when that Dresser affair took place. He had n’t said a word — he had n’t opened his mouth, even — but he was known to be an abolitionist; and so they searched his trunks and papers, and there they found documents expressing abolition sentiments, sure enough. Well, everybody, ministers and elders, joined in that affair, and stood by to see him whipped. I thought, myself, they went too far. But there is just where it is. People are not reasonable, and they won’t be reasonable, in such cases. It’s too much to ask of them; and so everybody ought to be cautious. Now, I wish, for my part, that ministers would confine themselves to their appropriate duties. ‘Christ’s kingdom is not of this world.’ And, then, you don’t know Tom Gordon. He is a terrible fellow! I never want to come in conflict with him. I thought I’d put the best face on it, and persuade him away. I did n’t want to make Tom Gordon my enemy. And I think, Mr. Dickson, if you must preach these doctrines, I think it would

be best for you to leave the state. Of course, we don't want to restrict any man's conscience; but when any kind of preaching excites brawls and confusion, and inflames the public mind, it seems to be a duty to give it up."

"Yes," said Mr. Cornet, the elder, "we ought to follow the things which make for peace — such things whereby one may edify another."

"Don't you see, gentlemen," said Mr. Clayton, "that such a course is surrendering our liberty of free speech into the hands of a mob? If Tom Gordon may dictate what is to be said on one subject, he may on another; and the rod which has been held over our friend's head to-night may be held over ours. Independent of the right or wrong of father Dickson's principles, he ought to maintain his position, for the sake of maintaining the right of free opinion in the state."

"Why," said Mr. Cornet, "the Scripture saith, 'If they persecute you into one city, flee ye into another.'"

"That was said," said Clayton, "to a people that lived under despotism, and had no rights of liberty given them to maintain. But, if we give way before mob law, we make ourselves slaves of the worst despotism on earth."

But Clayton spoke to men whose ears were stopped by the cotton of slothfulness and love of ease. They rose up, and said,

"It was time for them to be going."

Clayton expressed his intention of remaining over the night, to afford encouragement and assistance to his friends, in case of any further emergency.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MORE VIOLENCE.

CLAYTON rose the next morning, and found his friends much better than he had expected after the agitation and abuse of the night before. They seemed composed and cheerful.

"I am surprised," he said, "to see that your wife is able to be up this morning."

"They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength," said father Dickson. "How often I have found it so! We have seen times when I and my wife have both been so ill that we scarcely thought we had strength to help ourselves; and a child has been taken ill, or some other emergency has occurred that called for immediate exertion, and we have been to the Lord and found strength. Our way has been hedged up many a time — the sea before us and the Egyptians behind us; but the sea has always opened when we have stretched our hands to the Lord. I have never sought the Lord in vain. He has allowed great troubles to come upon us; but he always delivers us."

Clayton recalled the sneering, faithless, brilliant Frank Russel, and compared him, in his own mind, with the simple, honest man before him.

"No," he said, to himself, "human nature is not a humbug, after all. There are some real men — some who will not acquiesce in what is successful, if it be wrong."

Clayton was in need of such living examples; for, in regard to religion, he was in that position which is occupied by too many young men of high moral sentiment in this

country. What he had seen of the worldly policy and time-serving spirit of most of the organized bodies professing to represent the Christian faith and life, had deepened the shadow of doubt and distrust which persons of strong individuality and discriminating minds are apt to feel in certain stages of their spiritual development. Great afflictions — those which tear up the roots of the soul — are often succeeded, in the course of the man's history, by a period of scepticism. The fact is, such afflictions are disenchanting powers; they give to the soul an earnestness and a power of discrimination which no illusion can withstand. They teach us what we need, what we must have to rest upon; and, in consequence, thousands of little formalities, and empty shows, and dry religious conventionalities, are scattered by it like chaff. The soul rejects them, in her indignant anguish; and, finding so much that is insincere, and untrue, and unreliable, she has sometimes hours of doubting all things.

Clayton saw again in the minister what he had seen in Nina — a soul swayed by an attachment to an invisible person, whose power over it was the power of a personal attachment, and who swayed it, not by dogmas or commands, merely, but by the force of a sympathetic emotion. Beholding, as in a glass, the divine image of his heavenly friend, insensibly to himself the minister was changing into the same image. The good and the beautiful to him was an embodied person, — even Jesus his Lord.

“What may be your future course?” said Clayton, with anxiety. “Will you discontinue your labors in this state?”

“I may do so, if I find positively that there is no gaining a hearing,” said father Dickson. “I think we owe it to our state not to give up the point without a trial. There are those who are willing to hear me — willing to make a beginning with me. It is true they are poor and unfashionable; but still it is my duty not to desert them till I have tried, at least, whether the laws can't protect me in the exercise of my duty. The hearts of all men are in the hands

of the Lord. He turneth them as the rivers of water are turned. This evil is a great and a trying one. It is gradually lowering the standard of morals in our churches, till men know not what spirit they are of. I held it my duty not to yield to the violence of the tyrant, and bind myself to a promise to leave, till I had considered what the will of my Master would be."

"I should be sorry," said Clayton, "to think that North Carolina could n't protect you. I am sure, when the particulars of this are known, there will be a general reprobation from all parts of the country. You might remove to some other part of the state, not cursed by the residence of a man like Tom Gordon. I will confer with my uncle, your friend Dr. Cushing, and see if some more eligible situation cannot be found, where you can prosecute your labors. He is at this very time visiting his wife's father, in E., and I will ride over and talk with him to-day. Meanwhile," said Clayton, as he rose to depart, "allow me to leave with you a little contribution to help the cause of religious freedom in which you are engaged."

And Clayton, as he shook hands with his friend and his wife, left an amount of money with them such as had not crossed their palms for many a day. Bidding them adieu, a ride of a few hours carried him to E., where he communicated to Dr. Cushing the incidents of the night before.

"Why, it's perfectly shocking — abominable!" said Dr. Cushing. "Why, what are we coming to? My dear young friend, this shows the necessity of prayer. 'When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord must lift up a standard against him.'"

"My dear uncle," said Clayton, rather impatiently, "it seems to me the Lord has lifted up a standard in the person of this very man, and people are too cowardly to rally around it."

"Well, my dear nephew, it strikes me you are rather excited," said Dr. Cushing, good-naturedly.

"Excited?" said Clayton. "I ought to be excited! You

ought to be excited, too ! Here 's a good man beginning what you think a necessary reform, and who does it in a way perfectly peaceable and lawful, who is cloven down under the hoof of a mob, and all you can think of doing is to pray to *the Lord* to raise up a standard ! What would you think, if a man's house were on fire, and he should sit praying the Lord that in his mysterious providence he would put it out ? ”

“ O, the cases are not parallel,” said Dr. Cushing.

“ I think they are,” said Clayton. “ Our house is the state, and our house is on fire by mob law ; and, instead of praying the Lord to put it out, you ought to go to work and put it out yourself. If all you ministers would make a stand against this, uncle, and do all you can to influence those to whom you are preaching, it wouldn't be done again.”

“ I am sure I should be glad to do something. Poor father Dickson ! such a good man as he is ! But, then, I think, Clayton, he was rather imprudent. It don't do, this unadvised way of proceeding. We ought to watch against rashness, I think. We are too apt to be precipitate, and not await the leadings of Providence. Poor Dickson ! I tried to caution him, the last time I wrote to him. To be sure, it's no excuse for them ; but, then, I'll write to brother Barker on the subject, and we'll see if we can't get an article in the *Christian Witness*. I don't think it would be best to allude to these particular circumstances, or to mention any names ; but there might be a general article on the importance of maintaining the right of free speech, and of course people can apply it for themselves.”

“ You remind me,” said Clayton, “ of a man who proposed commencing an attack on a shark by throwing a sponge at him. But, now, really, uncle, I am concerned for the safety of this good man. Is n't there any church near you to which he can be called ? I heard him at the camp-meeting, and I think he is an excellent preacher.”

“ There are a good many churches,” said Dr. Cushing,

"which would be glad of him, if it were not for the course he pursues on that subject; and I really can't feel that he does right to throw away his influence so. He might be the means of converting souls, if he would only be quiet about this."

"Be quiet about fashionable sins," said Clayton, "in order to get a chance to convert souls! What sort of converts are those who are not willing to hear the truth on every subject? I should doubt conversions that can only be accomplished by silence on great practical immoralities."

"But," said Dr. Cushing, "Christ and the apostles did n't preach on the abuses of slavery, and they alluded to it as an existing institution."

"Nor did they preach on the gladiatorial shows," said Clayton; "and Paul draws many illustrations from them. Will you take the principle that everything is to be let alone now about which the apostles did n't preach directly?"

"I don't want to enter into that discussion now," said Dr. Cushing. "I believe I'll ride over and see brother Dickson. After all, he is a dear, good man, and I love him. I'd like to do something for him, if I were not afraid it might be misunderstood."

Toward evening, however, Clayton, becoming uneasy at the lonely situation of his clerical friend, resolved to ride over and pass the night with him, for the sake of protecting him; and, arming himself with a brace of pistols, he proceeded on his ride. As the day had been warm, he put off his purpose rather late, and darkness overtook him before he had quite accomplished his journey.

Riding deliberately through the woodland path in the vicinity of the swamp, he was startled by hearing the tramp of horses' hoofs behind him. Three men, mounted on horseback, were coming up, the headmost of whom, riding up quickly behind, struck him so heavy a blow with a gutta percha cane, as to fell him to the earth. In an instant, however, he was on his feet again, and had seized the bridle of his horse.

"Who are you?" said he; for, by the dim light that remained of the twilight, he could perceive that they all wore masks.

"We are men," said one of them, whose voice Clayton did not recognize, "that know how to deal with fellows who insult gentlemen, and then refuse to give them honorable satisfaction."

"And," said the second speaker, "we know how to deal with renegade abolitionists, who are covertly undermining our institutions."

"And," said Clayton, coolly, "you understand how to be cowards; for none but cowards would come three to one, and strike a man from behind! Shame on you! Well, gentlemen, act your pleasure. Your first blow has disabled my right arm. If you wish my watch and my purse, you may help yourselves, as cut-throats generally do!"

The stinging contempt which was expressed in these last words seemed to enrage the third man, who had not spoken. With a brutal oath, he raised his cane again, and struck at him.

"Strike a wounded man, who cannot help himself—do!" said Clayton. "Show yourself the coward you are! You are brave in attacking defenceless women and children, and ministers of the Gospel!"

This time the blow felled Clayton to the earth, and Tom Gordon, precipitating himself from his saddle, proved his eligibility for Congress by beating his defenceless acquaintance on the head, after the fashion of the chivalry of South Carolina. But, at this moment, a violent blow from an unseen hand struck his right arm, and it fell, broken, at his side. Mad with pain, he poured forth volumes of oaths, such as our readers have never heard, and the paper refuses to receive. And a deep voice said from the woods,

"Woe to the bloody and deceitful man!"

"Look for the fellow! where is he?" said Tom Gordon.

The crack of a rifle, and a bullet which passed right over

his head, answered from the swamp, and the voice, which he knew was Harry's, called from within the thicket,

"Tom Gordon, beware! Remember Hark!" At the same time another rifle-shot came over their heads.

"Come, come," said the other two, "there's a gang of them. We had better be off. You can't do anything with that broken arm, there." And, helping Tom into the saddle, the three rode away precipitately.

As soon as they were gone, Harry and Dred emerged from the thicket. The latter was reported among his people to have some medical and surgical skill. He raised Clayton up, and examined him carefully.

"He is not dead," he said.

"What shall we do for him?" said Harry. "Shall we take him along to the minister's cabin?"

"No, no," said Dred; "that would only bring the Philistines upon him!"

"It's full three miles to E.," said Harry. "It would n't do to risk going there."

"No, indeed," said Dred. "We must take him to our stronghold of Engedi, even as Samson bore the gates of Gaza. Our women shall attend him, and when he is recovered we will set him on his journey."

CHAPTER XXVII.

ENGEDI.

THE question may occur to our readers, why a retreat which appeared so easily accessible to the negroes of the vicinity in which our story is laid, should escape the vigilance of hunters.

In all despotic countries, however, it will be found that the oppressed party become expert in the means of secrecy. It is also a fact that the portion of the community who are trained to labor enjoy all that advantage over the more indolent portion of it which can be given by a vigorous physical system, and great capabilities of endurance. Without a doubt, the balance of the physical strength of the South now lies in the subject race. Usage familiarizes the dwellers of the swamp with the peculiarities of their location, and gives them the advantage in it that a mountaineer has in his own mountains. Besides, they who take their life in their hand exercise their faculties with more vigor and clearness than they who have only money at stake ; and this advantage the negroes had over the hunters.

Dred's "strong hold of Engedi," as we have said, was isolated from the rest of the swamp by some twenty yards of deep morass, in which it was necessary to wade almost to the waist. The shore presented to the eye only the appearance of an impervious jungle of cat-brier and grape-vine rising out of the water. There was but one spot on which there was a clear space to set foot on, and that was the place where Dred crept up on the night when we first introduced the locality to our readers' attention.

The hunters generally satisfied themselves with exploring more apparently accessible portions ; and, unless betrayed by those to whom Dred had communicated the clue, there was very little chance that any accident would ever disclose the retreat.

Dred himself appeared to be gifted with that peculiar faculty of discernment of spirits which belonged to his father, Denmark Vesey, sharpened into a preternatural intensity by the habits of his wild and dangerous life. The men he selected for trust were men as impenetrable as himself, the most vigorous in mind and body on all the plantations.

The perfectness of his own religious enthusiasm, his absolute certainty that he was inspired of God, as a leader and deliverer, gave him an ascendancy over the minds of those who followed him, which nothing but religious enthusiasm ever can give. And this was further confirmed by the rigid austerity of his life. For all animal comforts he appeared to entertain a profound contempt. He never tasted strong liquors in any form, and was extremely sparing in his eating ; often fasting for days in succession, particularly when he had any movement of importance in contemplation.

It is difficult to fathom the dark recesses of a mind so powerful and active as his, placed under a pressure of ignorance and social disability so tremendous. In those desolate regions which he made his habitation, it is said that trees often, from the singularly unnatural and wildly stimulating properties of the slimy depths from which they spring, assume a goblin growth, entirely different from their normal habit. All sorts of vegetable monsters stretch their weird, fantastic forms among its shadows. There is no principle so awful through all nature as the principle of *growth*. It is a mysterious and dread condition of existence, which, place it under what impediment or disadvantage you will, is constantly forcing on ; and when unnatural pressure hinders it, develops in forms portentous and astonishing. The wild, dreary belt of swamp-land which girds in those states scathed by the fires of despotism is an apt emblem,

in its rampant and we might say delirious exuberance of vegetation, of that darkly struggling, wildly vegetating swamp of human souls, cut off, like it, from the usages and improvements of cultivated life.

Beneath that fearful pressure, souls whose energy, well-directed, might have blessed mankind, start out in preternatural and fearful developments, whose strength is only a portent of dread.

The night after the meeting which we have described was one, to this singular being, of agonizing conflict. His psychological condition, as near as we can define it, seemed to be that of a human being who had been seized and possessed, after the manner related in ancient fables, by the wrath of an avenging God. That part of the moral constitution, which exists in some degree in us all, which leads us to feel pain at the sight of injustice, and to desire retribution for cruelty and crime, seemed in him to have become an absorbing sentiment, as if he had been chosen by some higher power as the instrument of doom. At some moments the idea of the crimes and oppressions which had overwhelmed his race rolled in upon him with a burning pain, which caused him to cry out, like the fated and enslaved Cassandra, at the threshold of the dark house of tyranny and blood.

This sentiment of justice, this agony in view of cruelty and crime, is in men a strong attribute of the highest natures; for he who is destitute of the element of moral indignation is effeminate and tame. But there is in nature and in the human heart a pleading, interceding element, which comes in constantly to temper and soften this spirit and this element in the divine mind, which the Scriptures represent by the sublime image of an eternally interceding high priest, who, having experienced every temptation of humanity, constantly urges all that can be thought in mitigation of justice. As a spotless and high-toned mother bears in her bosom the anguish of the impurity and vileness of her child, so the eternally suffering, eternally interceding love of Christ bears the sins of our race. But the Scriptures tell us

that the mysterious *person*, who thus stands before all worlds as the image and impersonation of divine tenderness, has yet in reserve this awful energy of wrath. The oppressors, in the last dread day, are represented as calling to the mountains and rocks to fall on them, and hide them from the wrath of the LAMB. This idea had dimly loomed up before the mind of Dred, as he read and pondered the mysteries of the sacred oracles; and was expressed by him in the form of language so frequent in his mouth, that "the Lamb was bearing the yoke of the sins of men." He had been deeply affected by the presentation which Milly had made in their night meeting of the eternal principle of intercession and atonement. The sense of it was blindly struggling with the habitual and overmastering sense of oppression and wrong.

When his associates had all dispersed to their dwellings, he threw himself on his face, and prayed, "O, Lamb of God, that bearest the yoke, why hast thou filled me with wrath? Behold these graves! Behold the graves of my brothers, slain without mercy, and, Lord, they do not repent! Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity. Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he? They make men as fishes in the sea, as creeping things that have no ruler over them. They take them up with the angle. They catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag. Therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. Shall they, therefore, empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations? Did not he that made them in the womb make us? Did not the same God fashion us in the womb? Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledgeth us not. Thou, O God, art our Father, our Redeemer. Wherefore forgettest thou us forever, and forsakest us so long a time? Wilt thou not judge between us and our enemies? Behold, there is none among

them that stirreth himself up to call upon thee, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. They lie in wait, they set traps, they catch men, they are waxen fat, they shine, they overpass the deeds of the wicked, they judge not the cause of the fatherless ; yet they prosper, and the right of the needy do they not judge. Wilt thou not visit for these things, O Lord ? Shall not thy soul be avenged on such a nation as this ? How long wilt thou endure ? Behold under the altar the souls of those they have slain ! They cry unto thee continually. How long, O Lord, dost thou not judge and avenge ? Is there any that stirreth himself up for justice ? Is there any that regardeth our blood ? We are sold for silver ; the price of our blood is in thy treasury ; the price of our blood is on thine altars ! Behold, they build their churches with the price of our hire ! Behold, the stone doth cry out of the wall, and the timber doth answer it. Because they build their towns with blood, and establish their cities by iniquity. They have all gone one way. There is none that careth for the spoilings of the poor. Art thou a just God ? When wilt thou arise to shake terribly the earth, that the desire of all nations may come ? Overturn, overturn, and overturn, till *he* whose right it is shall come ! ”

Such were the words, not uttered continuously, but poured forth at intervals, with sobbings, groanings, and moanings, from the recesses of that wild fortress. It was but a part of that incessant prayer with which oppressed humanity has besieged the throne of justice in all ages. We who live in ceiled houses would do well to give heed to that sound, lest it be to us that inarticulate moaning which goes before the earthquake. If we would estimate the force of almighty justice, let us ask ourselves what a mother might feel for the abuse of her helpless child, and multiply that by infinity.

But the night wore on, and the stars looked down serene and solemn, as if no prayer had gone through the calm, eternal gloom ; and the morning broke in the east resplendent.

Harry, too, had passed a sleepless night. The death of Hark weighed like a mountain upon his heart. He had known him for a whole-souled, true-hearted fellow. He had been his counsellor and friend for many years, and he had died in silent torture for him. How stinging is it at such a moment to view the whole respectability of civilized society upholding and glorifying the murderer; calling his sin by soft names, and using for his defence every artifice of legal injustice! Some in our own nation have had bitter occasion to know this, for we have begun to drink the cup of trembling which for so many ages has been drank alone by the slave. Let the associates of Brown ask themselves if they cannot understand the midnight anguish of Harry!

His own impulses would have urged to an immediate insurrection, in which he was careless about his own life, so the fearful craving of his soul for justice was assuaged. To him the morning seemed to break red with the blood of his friend. He would have urged to immediate and precipitate action. But Dred, true to the enthusiastic impulses which guided him, persisted in waiting for that sign from heaven which was to indicate when the day of grace was closed, and the day of judgment to begin. This expectation he founded on his own version of certain passages in the prophets, such as these:

"I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke! The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord shall come!"

Meanwhile, his associates were to be preparing the minds of the people, and he was traversing the swamps in different directions, holding nightly meetings, in which he read and expounded the prophecies to excited ears. The laborious arguments, by which Northern and Southern doctors of divinity have deduced from the Old Testament the divine institution of slavery, were too subtle and fine-spun to reach his ear amid the denunciations of prophecies, all turning on the sin of oppression. His instinctive understanding of the

spirit of the Bible justified the sagacity which makes the supporter of slavery, to this day, careful not to allow the slave the power of judging it for himself; and we leave it to any modern pro-slavery divine whether, in Dred's circumstances, his own judgment might not have been the same.

After daylight, Harry saw Dred standing, with a dejected countenance, outside of his hut.

"I have wrestled," he said, "for thee; but the time is not yet! Let us abide certain days, for the thing is secret unto me; and I cannot do less nor more till the Lord giveth commandment. When the Lord delivereth them into our hands, one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight!"

"After all," said Harry, "our case is utterly hopeless! A few poor, outcast wretches, without a place to lay our heads, and they all revelling in their splendor and their power! Who is there in this great nation that is not pledged against us? Who would not cry *Amen*, if we were dragged out and hung like dogs? The North is as bad as the South! They kill us, and the North consents and justifies! And all their wealth, power, and religion, are used against us. We are the ones that all sides are willing to give up. Any party in church or of state will throw in our blood and bones as a make-weight, and think nothing of it. And, when I see them riding out in their splendid equipages, their houses full of everything that is elegant, they so cultivated and refined, and our people so miserable, poor, and down-trodden, I have n't any faith that there is a God!"

"Stop!" said Dred, laying his hand on his arm. "Hear what the prophet saith. 'Their land, also, is full of silver and gold; neither is there any end of their treasures. Their land, also, is full of horses; neither is there any end of their chariots. Their land also is full of idols. They worship the work of their own hands. Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory

of His majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be on every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low! And upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures! And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, the haughtiness of man shall be made low! And they shall go in the holes of the rocks, and in the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth! ” ”

The tall pines, and whispering oaks, as they stood waving in purple freshness at the dawn, seemed like broad-winged attesting angels, bearing witness, in their serene and solemn majesty, to the sublime words, “Heaven and earth shall not pass away till these words have been fulfilled! ”

After a few moments a troubled expression came over the face of Dred.

“Harry,” he said, “verily, he is a God that hideth himself! He giveth none account to any of these matters. It may be that I shall not lead the tribes over this Jordan; but that I shall lay my bones in the wilderness! But the day shall surely come, and the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the air, and all tribes of the earth shall wail, because of him! Behold, I saw white spirits and black spirits, that contended in the air; and the thunder rolled, and the blood flowed, and the voice said, ‘Come rough, come smooth! Such is the decree. Ye must surely bear it!’ But, as yet, the prayers of the saints have power; for there be angels, having golden censers, which be the prayers of saints. And the Lord, by reason thereof, delayeth. Behold I have borne the burden of the Lord even for many years. He hath covered me with a cloud in the

day of his anger, and filled me with his wrath ; and his word has been like a consuming fire shut in my bones ! He hath held mine eyes waking, and my bones have waxed old with my roarings all the day long ! Then I have said, ‘ O, that thou wouldst hide me in the dust ! That thou wouldst keep me secret till thy wrath be past ! ’ ”

At this moment, soaring upward through the blue sky, rose the fair form of a wood-pigeon, wheeling and curving in the morning sunlight, cutting the ether with airy flight, so smooth, even, and clear, as if it had learnt motion from the music of angels.

Dred’s eye, faded and haggard with his long night-watchings, followed it for a moment with an air of softened pleasure, in which was blent somewhat of weariness and longing.

“ O, that I had wings like a dove ! ” he said. “ Then would I flee away and be at rest ! I would hasten from the windy storm and tempest ! Lo, then I would wander far off, and remain in the wilderness ! ”

There was something peculiar in the power and energy which this man’s nature had of drawing others into the tide of its own sympathies, as a strong ship, walking through the water, draws all the smaller craft into its current.

Harry, melancholy and disheartened as he was, felt himself borne out with him in that impassioned prayer.

“ I know,” said Dred, “ that the new heavens and the new earth shall come, and the redeemed of the Lord shall walk in it. But, as for me, I am a man of unclean lips, and the Lord hath laid on me the oppressions of the people ! But, though the violent man prevail against me, it shall surely come to pass ! ”

Harry turned away, and walked slowly to the other side of the clearing, where Old Tiff, with Fanny, Teddy, and Lisette, having kindled a fire on the ground, was busy in preparing their breakfast. Dred, instead of going into his house, disappeared in the thicket. Milly had gone home

with the man who came from Canema. The next day, as Harry and Dred made a hunting excursion through the swamp, returning home in the edge of the evening, they happened to be passing near the scene of lawless violence which we have already described.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SLAVE HUNT.

TOM GORDON, for the next two or three days after his injury, was about as comfortable to manage as a wounded hyena. He had a thousand varying caprices every hour and moment; and now one and now another prevailed. The miserable girls who were held by him as his particular attendants were tormented by every species of annoyance which a restless and passionate man, in his impatience, could devise.

The recent death of Milly's mistress by the cholera had reduced her under Tom's authority; and she was summoned now from her work every hour to give directions and advice, which, the minute they were given, were repudiated with curses.

"I declare," said Aunt Katy, the housekeeper, "if Mas'r Tom is n't 'nough to use a body off o' der feet. It's jist four times I's got gruel ready for him dis last two hours — doing all I could to suit him; and he swars at it, and flings it round real undecent. Why, he's got fever, and does he spect to make things taste good to him, when he's got fever! Why, course I can't, and no need of him calling me a devil, and all that! That ar's very unnecessary, I think. I don't believe in no such! The Gordons allers used to have some sense to 'em, even if they was cross; but he an't got a grain. I should think he was 'sessed wid Old Sam, for my part. Bringing 'sgrace on us all, the way he cuts up! We really don' know how to hold up our head, none of us. The Gordons have allers been sich a genteel

family ! Laws, we didn't know what privileges we had when we had Miss Nina ! Them new girls, dressed up in all their flounces and ferbuloes ! Guess they has to take it ! ”

In time, however, even in spite of his chafing, and fretfulness, and contempt of physicians' prescriptions, Tom seemed to recover, by the same kind of fatality which makes ill-weeds thrive apace. Meanwhile he employed his leisure hours in laying plans of revenge, to be executed as soon as he should be able to take to his horse again. Among other things, he vowed deep vengeance on Abijah Skinflint, who, he said, he knew *must* have sold the powder and ammunition to the negroes in the swamp. This may have been true, or may not ; but, in cases of lynch-law, such questions are indifferent matter. A man is accused, condemned, and judged, at the will of his more powerful neighbor. It was sufficient to Tom that *he thought so* ; and, being sick and cross, thought so just now with more particular intensity.

Jim Stokes, he knew, cherished an animosity of long standing towards Abijah, which he could make use of in enlisting him in the cause. One of the first uses, therefore, which Tom made of his recovered liberty, after he was able to ride out, was to head a raid on Abijah's shop. The shop was without ceremony dismantled and plundered ; and the mob, having helped themselves to his whiskey, next amused themselves by tarring and feathering him ; and, having insulted and abused him to their satisfaction, and exacted a promise from him to leave the state within three days, they returned home glorious in their own eyes. And the next week a brilliant account of the affair appeared in the *Trumpet of Liberty*, headed

“SUMMARY JUSTICE.”

Nobody pitied Abijah, of course ; and, as he would probably have been quite willing to join in the same sort of treatment for any one else, we know not that we are particularly concerned for his doom. The respectable peo-

ple in the neighborhood first remarked that they did n't approve of mobs in general, and then dilated, with visible satisfaction, on this in particular, after a fashion of that stupid class that are called respectable people, generally. The foolish mob gloried and exulted, not considering that any day the same weapons might be turned against them. The mob being now somewhat drilled and animated, Tom proposed, while their spirit was up, to get up a hunting in the swamp, which should more fully satisfy his own private vengeance. There is a sleeping tiger in the human breast that delights in violence and blood ; and this tiger Tom resolved to unchain.

The act of outlawry had already publicly set up Harry as a mark for whatever cruelty drunken ingenuity might choose to perpetrate. As our readers may have a curiosity in this kind of literature, we will indulge them with a copy of this :

“ State of North Carolina, Chowan County.

“ Whereas, complaint upon oath hath this day been made to us, two of the Justices of the Peace for the said county and state aforesaid, by Thomas Gordon, that a certain male slave belonging to him, named Harry, a carpenter by trade, about thirty-five years old, five feet four inches high, or thereabouts ; dark complexion, stout built, blue eyes, deep sunk in his head, forehead very square, tolerably loud voice ; hath absented himself from his master's service, and is supposed to be lurking about in the swamp, committing acts of felony or other misdeeds. These are, therefore, in the name of the state aforesaid, to command said slave forthwith to surrender himself, and return home to his said master. And we do hereby, by virtue of the act of assembly, in such case made and provided, intimate and declare that, if the said slave Harry doth not surrender himself, and return home immediately after the publication of these presents, that any person or persons may kill and destroy the said slave by such means as he or they may think fit, without accusation or impeachment of any crime or offence

for so doing, and without incurring any penalty or forfeiture thereby.

Given under our hands and seal,

“ JAMES T. MULLER, { SEAL. }
 “ T. BUTTERCOURT.”* { SEAL. }

One can scarcely contemplate without pity the condition of a population which grows up under the influence of such laws and customs as these. That the lowest brutality and the most fiendish cruelty should be remorselessly practised by those whose ferocity thus receives the sanction of the law, cannot be wondered at. Tom Gordon convened at his house an assemblage of those whom he used as the tools and ministers of his vengeance. Harry had been secretly hated by them all in his prosperous days, because, though a slave, he was better dressed, better educated, and, on the whole, treated with more consideration by the Gordon family and their guests, than they were; and, at times, he had had occasion to rebuke some of them for receiving from the slaves goods taken from the plantation. To be sure, while he was prosperous they were outwardly subservient to him, as the great man of a great family; but now he was *down*, as the amiable fashion of the world generally is, they resolved to make up for their former subservience by redoubled insolence.

Jim Stokes, in particular, bore Harry a grudge, for having once expressed himself with indignation concerning the meanness and brutality of his calling; and he was therefore the more willing to be made use of on the present occasion. Accordingly, on the morning we speak of, there was gathered before the door of the mansion at Canema a confused *mélange* of men, of that general style of appearance which, in our times, we call “Border Ruffians,”—halfdrunken, profane, obscene as the harpies which descended on the feast of *Æneas*. Tom Gordon had only this advantage among them, that superior education and position had given him

* The original document from which this is taken can be seen in the appendix. It appeared in the *Wilmington Journal*, December 18, 1850.

the power, when he chose, of assuming the appearance and using the language of a gentleman. But he had enough of grossness within, to enable him at will to become as one of them. Tom's arm was still worn in a sling, but, as lack of energy never was one of his faults, he was about to take the saddle with his troop. At present they were drawn up before the door, laughing, swearing, and drinking whiskey, which flowed in abundance. The dogs—the better-mannered brutes of the two, by all odds—were struggling in their leashes with impatience and excitement. Tom Gordon stood forth on the veranda, after the fashion of great generals of old, who harangued their troops on the eve of battle. Any one who has read the speeches of the leaders who presided over the sacking of Lawrence will get an idea of some features in this style of eloquence, which our pen cannot represent.

“Now, boys,” said Tom, “you are getting your names up. You've done some good work already. You've given that old, snivelling priest a taste of true orthodox doctrine, that will enlighten him for the future. You've given that long-nosed Skinflint light enough to see the error of *his* ways.”

A general laugh here arose, and voices repeated,

“Ah, ah, that we did! Did n't we, though?”

“I reckon you did!” said Tom Gordon. “I reckon he did n't need candles to see his sins by, that night! Did n't we make a candle of his old dog-kennel? Did n't he have light to see his way out of the state by? and did n't we give him a suit to keep him warm on the road? Ah, boys, that was a warm suit—no mistake! It was a suit that will stick to him, too! He won't trade that off for rum, in a hurry, I'm thinking! Will he, boys?”

Bursts of crazy, half-drunken applause here interrupted the orator.

“Pity we had n't put a match to it!” shouted one.

“Ah, well, boys, you did enough for that time! Wait till you catch these sneaking varmins in the swamp, you

shall do what you like with them. Nobody shall hinder you, that's law and order. These foxes have troubled us long enough, stealing at our hen-roosts while we were asleep. We shall make it hot for them, if we catch them; and we are going to catch them. There are no two ways about it. This old swamp is like Davy's coon — it's got *to come down!* And it will come down, boys, when it sees us coming. No mistake about that! Now, boys, mind, catch him alive, if you can; but shoot him, if you can't. Remember, I'll give a hundred and fifty dollars for his head!"

A loud shout chorused this last announcement, and Tom descended in glory to take his place in his saddle.

Once, we suppose, this history would not have been believed, had it been told; but of late our own sons and brothers have been hounded and hunted by just such men, with such means.

The fire which began in the dry tree has spread to the green!

Long live the *great Christianizing Institution!!!*

CHAPTER XXIX.

“ALL OVER.”

CLAYTON, at the time of the violent assault which we have described, received an injury upon the head which rendered him insensible.

When he came to himself, he was conscious at first only of a fanning of summer breezes. He opened his eyes, and looked listlessly up into the blue sky, that appeared through the thousand leafy hollows of waving boughs. Voices of birds warbling and calling, like answering echoes, to each other, fell dreamily on his ear. Some gentle hand was placing bandages about his head; and figures of women, he did not recognize, moved whisperingly around him, tending and watching.

He dropped asleep again, and thus for many hours lay in a kind of heavy trance.

Harry and Lisette had vacated, for his use, their hut; but, as it was now the splendid weather of October, when earth and sky become a temple of beauty and serenity, they tended him during the hours of the day in the open air, and it would seem as if there were no art of healing like to this. As air and heat and water all have a benevolent tendency to enter and fill up a vacuum, so we might fancy the failing vitality of the human system to receive accessions of vigor by being placed in the vicinity of the healthful growths of nature. All the trees which John saw around the river of life and heaven bore healing-leaves; and there may be a sense in which the trees of our world bear leaves that are healing both to body and soul. He who hath gone

out of the city, sick, disgusted, and wearied, and lain himself down in the forest, under the fatherly shadow of an oak, may have heard this whispered to him in the leafy rustlings of a thousand tongues.

* * * * *

"See," said Dred to Harry, as they were watching over the yet insensible form of Clayton, "how the word of the Lord is fulfilled on this people. He shall deliver them, every man, into the hand of his neighbor; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey!"

"Yes," said Harry; "but this is a good man; he stands up for our rights. If he had his way, we should soon have justice done us."

"Yes," said Dred, "but it is even as it was of old; 'behold I send unto you prophets and wise men, and some of them shall ye slay. For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears have they closed. Therefore, the Lord shall bring upon this generation the blood of all the slain, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias, the son of Barachias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar.'"

* * * * *

After a day or two spent in a kind of listless dreaming, Clayton was so far recovered as to be able to sit up and look about him. The serene tranquillity of the lovely October skies seemed to fall like a spell upon his soul.

Amidst the wild and desolate swamp, here was an island of security, where nature took men to her sheltering bosom. A thousand birds, speaking with thousand airy voices, were calling from breezy tree-tops, and from swinging cradles of vine-leaves; white clouds sailed, in changing and varying islands, over the heavy green battlements of the woods. The wavering slumberous sound of thousand leaves, through which the autumn air walked to and fro, consoled him. Life began to look to him like a troubled dream, forever past. His own sufferings, the hours of agony and death which he had never dared to remember, seemed now to

wear a new and glorified form. Such is the divine power in which God still reveals himself through the lovely and incorruptible forms of nature.

Clayton became interested in Dred, as a psychological study. At first he was silent and reserved, but attended to the wants of his guest with evident respect and kindness. Gradually, however, the love of expression, which lies hidden in almost every soul, began to unfold itself in him, and he seemed to find pleasure in a sympathetic listener. His wild jargon of hebraistic phrases, names, and allusions, had for Clayton, in his enfeebled state, a quaint and poetic interest. He compared him, in his own mind, to one of those old rude Gothic doorways, so frequent in European cathedrals, where scriptural images, carved in rough granite, mingle themselves with a thousand wayward, fantastic freaks of architecture; and sometimes he thought, with a sigh, how much might have been accomplished by a soul so ardent and a frame so energetic, had they been enlightened and guided.

Dred would sometimes come, in the shady part of the afternoon, and lie on the grass beside him, and talk for hours in a quaint, rambling, dreamy style, through which there were occasional flashes of practical ability and shrewdness.

He had been a great traveller—a traveller through regions generally held inaccessible to human foot and eye. He had explored not only the vast swamp-girdle of the Atlantic, but the everglades of Florida, with all their strange and tropical luxuriance of growth; he had wandered along the dreary and perilous belt of sand which skirts the southern Atlantic shores, full of quicksands and of dangers, and there he had mused of the eternal secret of the tides, with whose restless, never-ceasing rise and fall the soul of man has a mysterious sympathy. Destitute of the light of philosophy and science, he had revolved in the twilight of his ardent and struggling thoughts the causes of natural phenomena, and settled these questions for himself by theories of his own. Sometimes his residence for weeks had

been a stranded hulk, cast on one of these inhospitable shores, where he fasted and prayed, and fancied that answering voices came to him in the moaning of the wind and the sullen swell of the sea.

Our readers behold him now, stretched on the grass beside the hut of Harry and Lisette, in one of his calmest and most communicative moods.

The children, with Lisette and the women, were searching for grapes in a distant part of the enclosure; and Harry, with the other fugitive man, had gone to bring in certain provisions which were to have been deposited for them in a distant part of the swamp by some of their confederates on one of the plantations. Old Tiff was hoeing potatoes diligently in a spot not very far distant, and evidently listening to the conversation with an ear of shrewd attention.

"Yes," said Dred, with that misty light in his eye which one may often have remarked in the eye of enthusiasts, "the glory holds off, but it is coming! Now is the groaning time! *That* was revealed to me when I was down at Okerecoke, when I slept three weeks in the hulk of a ship out of which all souls had perished."

"Rather a dismal abode, my friend," said Clayton, by way of drawing him on to conversation.

"The Spirit drove me there," said Dred, "for I had besought the Lord to show unto me the knowledge of things to come; and the Lord bade me to go from the habitations of men, and to seek out the desolate places of the sea, and dwell in the wreck of a ship that was forsaken for a sign of desolation unto this people. So I went and dwelt there, and the Lord called me Amraphal, because hidden things of judgment were made known unto me. And the Lord showed unto me that even as a ship which is forsaken of the waters, wherein all flesh have died, so shall it be with the nation of the oppressor."

"How did the Lord show you this?" said Clayton, bent upon pursuing his inquiry.

"Mine ear received it in the night season," said Dred,

"and I heard how the whole creation groaneth and travaileth, waiting for the adoption ; and because of this he hath appointed the tide."

"I don't see the connection," said Clayton. "Why because of this?"

"Because," said Dred, "every day is full of labor, but the labor goeth back again into the seas. So that travail of all generations hath gone back, till the desire of all nations shall come, and He shall come with burning and with judgment, and with great shakings ; but in the end thereof shall be peace. Wherefore, it is written that in the new heavens and the new earth there shall be no more sea."

These words were uttered with an air of solemn, assured confidence, that impressed Clayton strangely. Something in his inner nature seemed to recognize in them a shadow of things hoped for. He was in that mood into which the mind of him who strives with the evils of this world must often fall — a mood of weariness and longing ; and heard within him the cry of the human soul, tempest-tossed and not comforted, for rest and assurance of the state where there shall be no more sea.

"So, then," he said unto Dred, "so, then, you believe that these heavens and earth shall be made new."

"Assuredly," said Dred. "And the King shall reign in righteousness. He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, — the poor and him that hath no helper. He shall redeem their souls from deceit and violence. He shall sit upon a white cloud, and the rainbow shall be round about his head. And the elect of the Lord shall be kings and priests on the earth."

"And do you think you shall be one of them?" said Clayton.

Dred gave a kind of inward groan.

"Not every one that prophesieth in his name shall be found worthy!" he said. "I have prayed the Lord, but he hath not granted me the assurance. I am the rod of his

wrath, to execute vengeance on his enemies. Shall the axe magnify itself against him that lifteth it?"

The conversation was here interrupted by Harry, who, suddenly springing from the tree, came up, in a hurried and agitated manner.

"The devil is broke loose!" he said. "Tom Gordon is out, with his whole crew at his heels, beating the swamp! A more drunken, swearing, ferocious set I never saw! They have got on to the trail of poor Jim, and are tracking him without mercy!"

A dark light flashed from Dred's eye, as he sprang upon his feet.

"The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; yea, the wilderness of Kadesh. I will go forth and deliver him!"

He seized his rifle and shot-bag, and in a few moments was gone. It was Harry's instinct to have followed him; but Lisette threw herself, weeping, on his neck.

"Don't go — don't!" she said. "What shall we all do without you? Stay with us! You'll certainly be killed, and you can do no good!"

"Consider," said Clayton, "that you have not the familiarity with these swamps, nor the wonderful physical power of this man. It would only be throwing away your life."

The hours of that day passed gloomily. Sometimes the brutal sound of the hunt seemed to sweep near them, — the crack of rifles, the baying of dogs, the sound of oaths, — and then again all went off into silence, and nothing was heard but the innocent patter of leaf upon leaf, and the warbling of the birds, singing cheerily, ignorant of the abyss of cruelty and crime over which they sang.

Towards sunset a rustling was heard in the branches of the oak, and Dred dropped down into the enclosure, wet, and soiled, and wearied. All gathered round him, in a moment.

"Where is Jim?" asked Harry.

"Gone!" said Dred. "The archers pressed him sore, and he hath fallen in the wilderness!"

There was a general exclamation of horror. Dred made a movement to sit down on the earth. He lost his balance, and fell; and they all saw now, what at first they had not noticed, a wound in his breast, from which the blood was welling. His wife fell by his side, with wild moans of sorrow. He lifted his hand, and motioned her from him.

"Peace," he said, "peace! It is enough! Behold, I go unto the witnesses who cry day and night!"

The circle stood around him in mute horror and surprise. Clayton was the first who had presence of mind to kneel and stanch the blood. Dred looked at him; his calm, large eyes filled with supernatural light.

"All over!" he said.

He put his hand calmly to his side, and felt the gushing blood. He took some in his hand and threw it upward, crying out, with wild energy, in the words of an ancient prophet,

"O, earth, earth, earth! Cover thou not my blood!"

Behind the dark barrier of the woods the sun was setting gloriously. Piles of loose, floating clouds, which all day long had been moving through the sky in white and silvery stillness, now one after another took up the rosy flush, and became each one a light-bearer, filled with ethereal radiance. And the birds sang on as they ever sing, unterrified by the great wail of human sorrow.

It was evident to the little circle that He who is mightier than the kings of the earth was there, and that that splendid frame, which had so long rejoiced in the exuberance of health and strength, was now to be resolved again into the eternal elements.

"Harry," he said, "lay me beneath the heap of witness. Let the God of their fathers judge between us!"

CHAPTER XXX.

THE BURIAL.

THE death of Dred fell like a night of despair on the hearts of the little fugitive circle in the swamps — on the hearts of multitudes in the surrounding plantations, who had regarded him as a prophet and a deliverer. He in whom they trusted was dead! The splendid, athletic form, so full of wild vitality, the powerful arm, the trained and keen-seeing eye, all struck down at once! The grand and solemn voice hushed, and all the splendid poetry of olden time, the inspiring symbols and prophetic dreams, which had so wrought upon his own soul, and with which he had wrought upon the souls of others, seemed to pass away with him, and to recede into the distance and become unsubstantial, like the remembered sounds of mighty winds, or solemn visions of evening clouds, in times long departed.

On that night, when the woods had ceased to reverberate the brutal sounds of baying dogs, and the more brutal profanity of drunken men; when the leaves stood still on the trees, and the forest lay piled up in the darkness like black clouds, and the morning star was standing like a calm angelic presence above them, there might have been heard in the little clearing a muffled sound of footsteps, treading heavily, and voices of those that wept with a repressed and quiet weeping, as they bore the wild chieftain to his grave beneath the blasted tree. Of the undaunted circle who had met there at the same hour many evenings before, some had dared to be present to-night; for, hearing the report of the hunt, they had left their huts on the plantations by stealth,

when all were asleep, and, eluding the vigilance of the patrols, the night watch which commonly guards plantations, had come to the forest to learn the fate of their friends ; and bitter was the dismay and anguish which filled their souls when they learned the result. It is melancholy to reflect, that among the children of one Father an event which excites in one class bitterness and lamentation should in another be cause of exultation and triumph. But the world has been thousands of years and not yet learned the first two words of the Lord's prayer ; and not until all tribes and nations have learned these will his kingdom come, and his will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.

Among those who stood around the grave, none seemed more bowed down and despairing than one whom we have before introduced to the reader, under the name of Hannibal. He was a tall and splendidly formed negro, whose large head, high forehead, and marked features, indicated resolution and intellectual ability. He had been all his life held as the property of an uneducated man, of very mean and parsimonious character, who was singularly divided in his treatment of him, by a desire to make the most of his energies and capabilities as a slave, and a fear lest they should develop so fast as to render him unfit for the condition of slavery.

Hannibal had taught himself to read and write, but the secret of the acquisition was guarded in his own bosom, as vigilantly as the traveller among thieves would conceal in his breast an inestimable diamond ; for he well knew that, were these acquisitions discovered, his master's fears would be so excited as to lead him to realize at once a present sum upon him, by selling him to the more hopeless prison-house of the far South, thus separating him from his wife and family.

Hannibal was generally employed as the keeper of a ferry-boat by his master, and during the hours when he was waiting for passengers found many opportunities for gratifying, in an imperfect manner, his thirst for knowledge.

Those who have always had books about them more than they could or would read know nothing of the passionate eagerness with which a repressed and starved intellect devours in secret its stolen food.

In a little chink between the logs of his ferry-house there was secreted a Bible, a copy of Robinson Crusoe, and an odd number of a Northern newspaper which had been dropped from the pocket of a passenger; and when the door was shut and barred at night, and his bit of pine knot lighted, he would take these out and read them hour by hour. There he yearned after the wild freedom of the desolate island. He placed his wife and children, in imagination, in the little barricaded abode of Robinson. He hunted and made coats of skin, and gathered strange fruits from trees with unknown names, and felt himself a free man.

Over a soul so strong and so repressed it is not to be wondered at that Dred should have acquired a peculiar power. The study of the Bible had awakened in his mind that vague tumult of aspirations and hopes which it ever excites in the human breast; and he was prompt to believe that the Lord who visited Israel in Egypt had listened to the sighings of their captivity, and sent a prophet and a deliverer to his people.

Like a torch carried in a stormy night, this hope had blazed up within him; but the cold blast of death had whistled by, and it was extinguished forever.

Among the small band that stood around the dead, on the edge of the grave, he stood, looking fixedly on the face of the departed. In the quaint and shaggy mound to which Dred had attached that strange, rugged, oriental appellation, *Jegar Sahadutha*, or the "heap of witness," there was wildly flaring a huge pine-knot torch, whose light fell with a red, distinct glare on the prostrate form that lay there like a kingly cedar uprooted, no more to wave its branches in air, yet mighty in its fall, with all the shaggy majesty of its branches around. Whatever might have been the strife and struggle of the soul once imprisoned in that

form, there was stamped upon the sombre face an expression of majestic and mournful tranquillity, as if that long-suffering and gracious God, to whose judgment he had made his last appeal, had rendered that judgment in mercy. When the statesmen and mighty men of *our* race die, though they had the weaknesses and sins of humanity, they want not orators in the church to draw the veil gently, to speak softly of their errors and loudly of their good, and to predict for them, if not an abundant entrance, yet at least a safe asylum among the blessed ; and something not to be rebuked in our common nature inclines to join in a hopeful amen. It is not easy for us to believe that a great and powerful soul can be lost to God and itself forever.

But he who lies here so still and mournfully in this flickering torch-light had struggling within him the energies which make the patriot and the prophet. Crushed beneath a mountain of ignorance, they rose blind and distorted ; yet had knowledge enlightened and success crowned them, his name might have been, with that of Toussaint, celebrated in mournful sonnet by the deepest thinking poet of the age.

"Thou hast left behind
Powers that will work for thee ; air, earth, and skies ;
There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee ; thou hast great allies ;
Thy friends are exaltations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind."

The weight of so great an affliction seemed to have repressed the usual vivacity with which the negro is wont to indulge the expression of grief. When the body was laid down by the side of the grave, there was for a time a silence so deep that the rustling of the leaves, and the wild, doleful clamor of the frogs and turtles in the swamps, and the surge of the winds in the pine-tree tops, were all that met the ear. Even the wife of the dead stood with her shawl wrapped tightly about her, rocking to and fro, as if in the extremity of grief.

An old man in the company, who had officiated sometimes

as preacher among the negroes, began to sing a well-known hymn very commonly used at negro funerals, possibly because its wild and gloomy imagery has something exciting to their quick imaginations. The words rose on the night air :

“Hark, from the tombs a doleful sound,
My ears attend the cry;
Ye living men, come view the ground
Where you must shortly lie.”

During the singing of this verse Hannibal stood silent, with his arms gloomily folded, his eyes fixed on the lifeless face. Gradually the sentiment seemed to inspire his soul with a kind of serene triumph ; he lifted his head, and joined his deep bass voice in the singing of the second verse :

“Princes, this clay must be your bed,
In spite of all your towers;
The tall, the wise, the reverend head,
Must lie as low as ours.”

“ Yes,” he said, “ brethren, that will be the way of it. They triumph and lord it over us now, but their pomp will be brought down to the grave, and the noise of their viols. The worm shall be spread under them, and the worm shall cover them ; and when we come to stand together at the judgment seat, our testimony will be took there if it never was afore ; and the Lord will judge atween us and our oppressors,—that’s one comfort. Now, brethren, let’s jest lay him in the grave, and he that’s a better man, or would have done better in his place, let him judge him if he dares.”

They lifted him up and laid him into the grave ; and in a few moments all the mortal signs by which that soul had been known on earth had vanished, to appear no more till the great day of judgment and decision.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE ESCAPE.

CLAYTON had not been an unsympathizing or inattentive witness of these scenes.

It is true that he knew not the whole depth of the affair; but Harry's letter and his own observations had led him, without explanation, to feel that there was a perilous degree of excitement in some of the actors in the scene before him, which, unless some escape-valve were opened, might lead to most fatal results.

The day after the funeral, he talked with Harry, wisely and kindly, assuming nothing to himself on the ground either of birth or position; showing to him the undesirableness and hopelessness, under present circumstances, of any attempt to right by force the wrongs under which his class were suffering, and opening to him and his associates a prospect of a safer way by flight to the Free States.

One can scarcely appreciate the moral resolution and force of character which could make a person in Clayton's position in society—himself sustaining, in the eye of the law, the legal relation of a slaveholder—give advice of this kind. No crime is visited with more unsparing rigor by the régime of Southern society than the aiding or abetting the escape of a slave. He who does it is tried as a negro-stealer; and in some states death, in others a long and disgraceful imprisonment in the penitentiary, is the award.

For granting the slightest assistance and succor, in cases

like these, — for harboring the fugitive for even a night, — for giving him the meanest shelter and food, — persons have been stripped of their whole property, and turned out destitute upon the world. Others, for no other crime, have languished years in unhealthy dungeons, and coming out at last with broken health and wasted energies ; nor has the most saintly patience and purity of character in the victim been able to lessen or mitigate the penalty.

It was therefore only by the discerning power of a mind sufficiently clear and strong to see its way through the mists of educational association, that Clayton could feel himself to be doing right in thus violating the laws and customs of the social state under which he was born. But, in addition to his belief in the inalienable right of every man to liberty, he had at this time a firm conviction that nothing but the removal of some of these minds from the oppressions which were goading them could prevent a development of bloody insurrection.

It is probable that nothing has awakened more bitterly the animosity of the slaveholding community than the existence in the Northern States of an indefinite yet very energetic institution, known as *the underground railroad* ; and yet, would they but reflect wisely on the things that belong to their peace, they would know that this has removed many a danger from their dwellings. One has only to become well acquainted with some of those fearless and energetic men who have found their way to freedom by its means, to feel certain that such minds and hearts would have proved, in time, an incendiary magazine under the scorching reign of slavery. But, by means of this, men of that class who cannot be kept in slavery have found a road to liberty which endangered the shedding of no blood but their own ; and the record of the strange and perilous means by which these escapes have been accomplished sufficiently shows the resolute nature of the men by whom they were undertaken.

It was soon agreed that a large party of fugitives should

in concert effect their escape. Harry, being so white as easily to escape detection out of the immediate vicinity where he was known, assumed the task of making arrangements, for which he was amply supplied with money by Clayton.

It is well known that there are, during the greater part of the year, lumberers engaged in the cutting and making of shingles, who have extensive camps in the swamp, and live there for months at a time. These camps are made by laying foundations of logs on the spongy soil, thus forming platforms on which rude cabins are erected. In the same manner roads are constructed into distant parts of the swamp, by means of which transportation is carried on. There is also a canal cut through the middle of the swamp, on which small sailing craft pass backwards and forwards with shingles and produce.

In the employ of these lumberers are multitudes of slaves hired from surrounding proprietors. They live here in a situation of comparative freedom, being only obliged to make a certain number of staves or shingles within a stipulated time, and being furnished with very comfortable provision. Living thus somewhat in the condition of free-men, they are said to be more intelligent, energetic, and self-respecting, than the generality of slaves. The camp of the fugitives had not been without intercourse with the camp of lumberers, some five miles distant. In cases of straits they had received secret supplies from them, and one or two of the more daring and intelligent of the slave lumberers had attended some of Dred's midnight meetings. It was determined, therefore, to negotiate with one of the slaves who commanded a lighter, or small vessel, in which lumber was conveyed to Norfolk, to assist their escape.

On some consultation, however, it was found that the numbers wanting to escape were so large as not to be able, without exciting suspicion, to travel together, and it was therefore decided to make two detachments. Milly had determined to cast in her lot with the fugitives, out of regard to her grandchild, poor little Tomtit, whose utter and merry

thoughtlessness formed a touching contrast to the gravity and earnestness of her affections and desires for him. He was to her the only remaining memorial of a large family, which had been torn from her by the ordinary reverses and chances of slavery; and she clung to him, therefore, with the undivided energy of her great heart. As far as her own rights were concerned, she would have made a willing surrender of them, remaining patiently in the condition wherein she was called, and bearing injustice and oppression as a means of spiritual improvement, and seeking to do what good lay in her power.

Every individual has an undoubted right, if he chooses, thus to resign the rights and privileges of his earthly birthright; but the question is a very different one when it involves the improvement and the immortal interests of those for whom the ties of blood oblige him to have care.

Milly, who viewed everything with the eye of a Christian, was far less impressed by the rigor and severity of Tom Gordon's administration than by the dreadful demoralization of character which he brought upon the plantation.

Tomtit being a bright, handsome child, his master had taken a particular fancy to him. He would have him always about his person, and treated him with the same mixture of indulgence and caprice which one would bestow upon a spaniel. He took particular pleasure in teaching him to drink and to swear, apparently for nothing else than the idle amusement it afforded him to witness the exhibition of such accomplishments in so young a child.

In vain Milly, who dared use more freedom with him than any other servant, expostulated. He laughed or swore at her, according to the state in which he happened to be. Milly, therefore, determined at once to join the flying party, and take her darling with her. Perhaps she would not have been able to accomplish this, had not what she considered a rather fortunate reverse, about this time, brought Tomtit into disgrace with his master. Owing to some piece of careless mischief which he had

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committed, he had been beaten with a severity as thoughtless as the indulgence he at other times received, and, while bruised and trembling from this infliction, he was fully ready to fly anywhere.

Quite unexpectedly to all parties, it was discovered that Tom Gordon's confidential servant and valet, Jim, was one of the most forward to escape. This man, from that peculiar mixture of boldness, adroitness, cunning, and drollery, which often exists among negroes, had stood for years as prime and undisputed favorite with his master; he had never wanted for money, or for anything that money could purchase; and he had had an almost unproved liberty of saying, in an odd fashion, what he pleased, with the licensed audacity of a court buffoon.

One of the slaves expressed astonishment that he, in his favored position, should think of such a thing. Jim gave a knowing inclination of his head to one side, and said:

"Fac' is, bredren, dis chile is jest tired of dese yer partnership concerns. I and mas'r, we has all tings in common, sure 'nough; but den I'd rather have less of 'em, and have something dat's *mine*; 'sides which, I never's going to have a wife till I can get one dat'll belong to myself; dat ar's a ting I's 'ticular 'bout."

The conspirators were wont to hold their meetings nightly in the woods, near the swamp, for purposes of concert and arrangement.

Jim had been trusted so much to come and go at his own pleasure, that he felt little fear of detection, always having some plausible excuse on hand, if inquiries were made.

It is to be confessed that he had been a very profane and irreverent fellow, often attending prayer-meetings, and other religious exercises of the negroes, for no other apparent purpose than to be able to give burlesque imitations of all the proceedings, for the amusement of his master and his master's vile associates. Whenever, therefore, he was

missed, he would, upon inquiry, assert, with a knowing wink, that "he had been out to de prayer-meetin'."

"Seems to me, Jim," says Tom, one morning, when he felt peculiarly ill-natured, "seems to me you are doing nothing but go to meeting, lately. I don't like it, and I'm not going to have it. Some deviltry or other you are up to, and I'm going to put a stop to it. Now, mind yourself; don't you go any more, or I'll give you ——"

We shall not mention particularly what Tom was in the habit of threatening to give.

Here was a dilemma. One attendance more in the woods this very night was necessary, — was, indeed, indispensable. Jim put all his powers of pleasing into requisition. Never had he made such desperate efforts to be entertaining. He sang, he danced, he mimicked sermons, carried on mock meetings, and seemed to whip all things sacred and profane together, in one great syllabub of uproarious merriment; and this to an idle man, with a whole day upon his hands, and an urgent necessity for never having time to think, was no small affair.

Tom mentally reflected in the evening, as he lay stretched out in the veranda, smoking his cigar, what in the world he should do without Jim, to keep him in spirits; and Jim, under cover of the day's glory, had ventured to request of his master the liberty of an hour, which he employed in going to his tryst in the woods. This was a bold step, considering how positively he had been forbidden to do it in the morning; but Jim heartily prayed to his own wits, the only god he had been taught to worship, to help him out once more. He was returning home, hastening, in order to be in season for his master's bed-time, hoping to escape unquestioned as to where he had been.

The appointments had all been made, and, between two and three o'clock that night, the whole party were to strike out upon their course, and ere morning to have travelled the first stage of their pilgrimage towards freedom.

Already the sense of a new nature was beginning to dawn on Jim's mind—a sense of something graver, steadier, and more manly, than the wild, frolicsome life he had been leading; and his bosom throbbed with a strange, new, unknown hope.

Suddenly, on the very boundary of the spot where the wood joins the plantation, who should he meet but Tom Gordon, sent there as if he had been warned by his evil stars.

“Now, Lord help me! if dere is any Lord,” said Jim. “Well, I’s got to blaze it out now de best way I ken.”

He walked directly up to his master, with his usual air of saucy assurance.

“Why, Jim,” said Tom, “where have you been? I’ve been looking for you.”

“Why, bless you, mas’r, honey, I’s been out to de meetin’.”

“Didn’t I tell you, you dog,” said Tom, with an oath, “that you were not to go to any more of those meetings?”

“Why, laws, mas’r, honey, chile, ’fore my heavenly mas’r, I done forgot every word you said!” said Jim. “I’s so kind o’ tumbled up and down this day, and things has been so cur’us!”

The ludicrous grimace and tone, and attitude of affected contrition, with which all this was said, rather amused Tom; and, though he still maintained an air of sternness, the subtle negro saw at once his advantage, and added, “’Clare if I is n’t most dead! Ole Pomp, he preached, and he gets me so full o’ grace I’s fit to bust. Has to do something wicked, else I’ll get translated one dese yer days, like ’Lijah, and den who’d mas’r have fur to wait on him?”

“I don’t believe you’ve been to meeting,” said Tom, eying him with affected suspicion. “You’ve been out on some spree.”

“Why, laws, mas’r, honey, you hurts my feelings! Why, now, I’s in hopes you’d say you see de grace a shining out all over me. Why, I’s been in a clar state

of glorrufication all dis evening. Dat ar old Pomp, dar's no mistake, he does lift a body up powerful ! ”

“ You don't remember a word he said, now, I'll bet,” said Tom. “ Where was the text ? ”

“ Text ! ” said Jim, with assurance ; “ 't was in the twenty-fourth chapter of Jerusalem, sixteenth verse.”

“ Well,” said Tom, “ what was it ? I should like to know.”

“ Laws, mas'r, I b'lieve I can 'peat it,” said Jim, with an indescribable air of waggish satisfaction. “ 'T was dis yer : ‘ Ye shall sarch fur me in de mornin' and ye won't find me.’ Dat ar's a mighty solemn text, mas'r, and ye ought to be 'flecting on 't.”

And Tom had occasion to reflect upon it, the next morning, when, having stormed, and swore, and pulled until he broke the bell-wire, no Jim appeared. It was some time before he could actually realize or believe he was gone.

“ The ungrateful dog ! The impudent puppy, who had had all his life everything he wanted, to run away from him ! ”

Tom aroused the whole country in pursuit ; and, as servants were found missing in many other plantations, there was a general excitement through the community. The *Trumpet of Liberty* began to blow dolorous notes, and articles headed, “ The results of Abolitionist teaching, and covert incendiarism,” began to appear. It was recommended that a general search should be made through the country for all persons tinctured with abolitionist sentiments, and immediate measures pursued to oblige them to leave the state forthwith.

One or two respectable gentlemen, who were in the habit of taking the *National Era*, were visited by members of a vigilance committee, and informed that they must immediately drop the paper or leave the state ; and when one of them talked of his rights as a free citizen, and inquired how they would enforce their requisitions, supposing he determined to stand for his liberty, the party informed

him succinctly to the following purport: "If you do not comply, your corn, grain, and fodder, will be burned; your cattle driven off; and, if you still persist, your house will be set on fire and consumed, and you will never know who does it."

When the good gentleman inquired if this was freedom, his instructors informed him that freedom consisted in their right and power to make their neighbors submit to their own will and dictation; and he would find himself in a free country so far as this, that every one would feel at liberty to annoy and maltreat him so long as he opposed the popular will.

This modern doctrine of liberty has of late been strikingly and edifyingly enforced on the minds of some of our brethren and sisters in the new states, to whom the offer of relinquishing their principles or their property and lives has been tendered with the same admirable explicitness.

It is scarcely necessary to remark that both these worthy gentlemen, to use the language of their conquerors, "caved in," and thus escaped with no other disadvantage than a general plundering of their smoke-houses, the hams in which were thought a desirable addition to a triumphal entertainment proposed to be given in honor of law and order by THE ASSOCIATE BANDS of the GLORIOUS IMMORTAL COONS, the body-guard which was Tom Gordon's instrument in all these exploits.

In fact, this association, although wanting the advantage of an ordaining prayer and a distribution of Bibles, as has been the case with some more recently sent from Southern states, to beat the missionary drum of state rights and the principles of law and order on our frontiers, yet conducted themselves in a manner which might have won them approbation even in Col. Buford's regiment, giving such exhibitions of liberty as were sufficient to justify all despots for putting it down by force for centuries to come.

Tom Gordon was the great organizer and leader of all these operations; his suspicions had connected Clayton

with the disappearance of his slaves, and he followed upon his track with the sagacity of a bloodhound.

The outrage which he had perpetrated upon him in the forest, so far from being a matter of sham or concealment, was paraded as a cause for open boast and triumph. Tom rode about with his arm in a sling as a wounded hero, and received touching testimonials and demonstrations from sundry ladies of his acquaintance for his gallantry and spirit. When on the present occasion he found the pursuit of his slaves hopeless, his wrath and malice knew no bounds, and he determined to stir up and enkindle against Clayton to the utmost degree the animosities of the planters around his estate of Magnolia Grove.

This it was not difficult to do. We have already shown how much latent discontent and heart-burning had been excited by the course which Clayton and his sister had pursued on their estate.

Tom Gordon had a college acquaintance with the eldest son of one of the neighboring families, a young man of as reckless and dissipated habits as his own.

Hearing, therefore, that Clayton had retired to Magnolia Grove, he accepted an invitation of this young man to make him a visit, principally, as it would appear, for the purpose of instigating some mischief.

CHAPTER XXXII.

LYNCH LAW AGAIN.

THE reader next beholds Clayton at Magnolia Grove, whither he had fled to recruit his exhausted health and spirits. He had been accompanied there by Frank Russel.

Our readers may often have observed how long habits of intimacy may survive between two persons who have embarked in moral courses, which, if pursued, must eventually separate them forever.

For such is the force of moral elements, that the ambitious and self-seeking cannot *always* walk with those who love good for its own sake. In this world, however, where all these things are imperfectly developed, habits of intimacy often subsist a long time between the most opposing affinities.

The fact was that Russel would not give up the society of Clayton. He admired the very thing in him which he wanted himself; and he comforted himself for not listening to his admonitions by the tolerance and good-nature with which he had always heard them. When he heard that he was ill, he came to him and insisted upon travelling with him, attending him with the utmost fidelity and kindness.

Clayton had not seen Anne before since his affliction — both because his time had been very much engaged, and because they who cannot speak of their sorrows often shrink from the society of those whose habits of intimacy and affection might lead them to desire such confidence. But he was not destined in his new retreat to find the peace he desired. Our readers may remember that there were intima-

tions conveyed through his sister some time since of discontent arising in the neighborhood.

The presence of Tom Gordon soon began to make itself felt. As a conductor introduced into an electric atmosphere will draw to itself the fluid, so he became an organizing point for the prevailing dissatisfaction.

He went to dinner-parties and talked ; he wrote in the nearest paper ; he excited the inflammable and inconsiderate ; and, before he had been there many weeks, a vigilance association was formed among the younger and more hot-headed of his associates, to search out and extirpate covert abolitionism. Anne and her brother first became sensible of an entire cessation of all those neighborly acts of kindness and hospitality, in which Southern people, when in a good humor, are so abundant.

At last, one day Clayton was informed that three or four gentlemen of his acquaintance were wishing to see him in the parlor below.

On descending, he was received first by his nearest neighbor, Judge Oliver, a fine-looking elderly gentleman, of influential family connection.

He was attended by Mr. Bradshaw, whom we have already introduced to our readers, and by a Mr. Knapp, who was a very wealthy planter, a man of great energy and ability, who had for some years figured as the representative of his native state in Congress.

It was evident, by the embarrassed air of the party, that they had come on business of no pleasing character.

It is not easy for persons, however much excited they may be, to enter at once upon offensive communications to persons who receive them with calm and gentlemanly civility ; therefore, after being seated, and having discussed the ordinary topics of the weather and the crops, the party looked one upon another, in a little uncertainty which should begin the real business of the interview.

"Mr. Clayton," at length said Judge Oliver, "we are really sorry to be obliged to make disagreeable communica-

tions to you. We have all of us had the sincerest respect for your family, and for yourself. I have known and honored your father many years, Mr. Clayton; and, for my own part, I must say I anticipated much pleasure from your residence in our neighborhood. I am really concerned to be obliged to say anything unpleasant; but I am under the necessity of telling you that the course you have been pursuing with regard to your servants, being contrary to the laws and usages of our social institutions, can no longer be permitted among us. You are aware that the teaching of slaves to read and write is forbidden by the law, under severe penalties. We have always been liberal in the interpretation of this law. Exceptional violations, conducted with privacy and discretion, in the case of favored servants, whose general good conduct seems to merit such confidence, have from time to time existed, and passed among us without notice or opposition; but the instituting of a regular system of instruction, to the extent and degree which exists upon your plantation, is a thing so directly in the face of the law, that we can no longer tolerate it; and we have determined, unless this course is dropped, to take measures to put the law into execution."

"I had paid my adopted state the compliment," said Clayton, "to suppose such laws to be a mere relic of barbarous ages, which the practical Christianity of our times would treat as a dead letter. I began my arrangements in all good faith, not dreaming that there could be found those who would oppose a course so evidently called for by the spirit of the Gospel, and the spirit of the age."

"You are entirely mistaken, sir," said Mr. Knapp, in a tone of great decision, "if you suppose these laws are, or can ever be, a matter of indifference to us, or can be suffered to become a dead letter. Sir, they are founded in the very nature of our institutions. They are indispensable to the preservation of our property, and the safety of our families. Once educate the negro population, and the whole system of our domestic institutions is at an end. Our

negroes have acquired already, by living among us, a degree of sagacity and intelligence which makes it difficult to hold an even rein over them; and, once open the flood-gates of education, and there is no saying where they and we might be carried. I, for my part, do not approve of these exceptional instances Judge Oliver mentioned. Generally speaking, those negroes whose intelligence and good conduct would make them the natural recipients of such favors are precisely the ones who ought not to be trusted with them. It ruins them. Why, just look at the history of the insurrection that very nearly cut off the whole city of Charleston: what sort of men were those who got it up? They were just your steady, thoughtful, well-conducted men, — just the kind of men that people are teaching to read, because they think they are so good it can do no harm. Sir, my father was one of the magistrates on the trial of those men, and I have heard him say often there was not one man of bad character among them. They had all been *remarkable* for their good character. Why, there was that Denmark Vesey, who was the head of it: for twenty years he served his master, and was the most faithful creature that ever breathed; and after he got his liberty, everybody respected him, and liked him. Why, at first, my father said the magistrates could not be brought to arrest him, they were so sure that he could not have been engaged in such an affair. Now, all the leaders in that affair could read and write. They kept their lists of names; and nobody knows, or ever will know, how many were down on them, for those fellows were deep as the grave, and you could not get a word out of them. Sir, they died and made no sign; but all this is a warning to us."

"And do you think," said Clayton, "that if men of that degree of energy and intelligence are refused instruction, they will not find means to get knowledge for themselves? And if they do get it themselves, in spite of your precautions, they will assuredly use it against you."

"The fact is, gentlemen, it is inevitable that a certain

degree of culture must come from their intercourse with us, and minds of a certain class *will* be stimulated to desire more; and all the barriers we put up will only serve to inflame curiosity, and will make them feel a perfect liberty to use the knowledge they conquer from us against us. In my opinion, the only sure defence against insurrection is systematic education, by which we shall acquire that influence over their minds which our superior cultivation will enable us to hold. Then, as fast as they become fitted to enjoy rights, we must grant them."

"Not we, indeed!" said Mr. Knapp, striking his cane upon the floor. "We are not going to lay down our power in that way. We will not allow any such beginning. We must hold them down firmly and consistently. For my part, I dislike even the system of oral religious instruction. It starts their minds, and leads them to want something more. It's indiscreet, and I always said so. As for teaching them out of the Bible, — why, the Bible is the most exciting book that ever was put together! It always starts up the mind, and it's unsafe."

"Don't you see," said Clayton, "what an admission you are making? What sort of a system must this be, that requires such a course to sustain it?"

"I can't help that," said Mr. Knapp. "There's millions and millions invested in it, and we can't afford to risk such an amount of property for mere abstract speculation. The system is as good as forty other systems that have prevailed, and will prevail. We can't take the frame-work of society to pieces. We must proceed with things as they are. And now, Mr. Clayton, another thing I have to say to you," said he, looking excited, and getting up and walking the floor. "It has been discovered that you receive incendiary documents through the post-office; and this cannot be permitted, sir."

The color flushed into Clayton's face, and his eye kindled as he braced himself in his chair. "By what right," he

said, "does any one pry into what I receive through the post-office? Am I not a free man?"

"No, sir, you are not," said Mr. Knapp, — "not free to receive that which may imperil a whole neighborhood. You are not free to store barrels of gunpowder on your premises, when they may blow up ours. Sir, we are obliged to hold the mail under supervision in this state; and suspected persons will not be allowed to receive communications without oversight. Don't you remember that the general post-office was broken open in Charleston, and all the abolition documents taken out of the mail-bags and consumed, and a general meeting of all the most respectable citizens, headed by the clergy in their robes of office, solemnly confirmed the deed?"

"I think, Mr. Knapp," said Judge Oliver, interposing in a milder tone, "that your excitement is carrying you further than you are aware. I should rather hope that Mr. Clayton would perceive the reasonableness of our demand, and of himself forego the taking of these incendiary documents."

"I take no incendiary documents," said Clayton, warmly. "It is true I take an anti-slavery paper, edited at Washington, in which the subject is fairly and coolly discussed. I hold it no more than every man's duty to see both sides of a question."

"Well, there, now," said Mr. Knapp, "you see the disadvantage of having your slaves taught to read. If they could not read your papers, it would be no matter what you took; but to have them get to reasoning on these subjects, and spread their reasonings through our plantations, — why, there'll be the devil to pay, at once."

"You must be sensible," said Judge Oliver, "that there must be some individual rights which we resign for the public good. I have looked over the paper you speak of, and I acknowledge it seems to me very fair; but, then, in our peculiar and critical position, it might prove dangerous to have such reading about my house, and I never have it."

"In that case," said Clayton, "I wonder you don't suppress your own newspapers; for as long as there is a congressional discussion, or a Fourth of July oration or senatorial speech in them, so long they are full of incendiary excitement. Our history is full of it, our state bills of rights are full of it, the lives of our fathers are full of it; we must suppress our whole literature, if we would avoid it."

"Now, don't you see," said Mr. Knapp, "you have stated just so many reasons why slaves must not learn to read?"

"To be sure I do," said Clayton, "if they are always to remain slaves, if we are never to have any views of emancipation for them."

"Well, they *are* to remain slaves," said Mr. Knapp, speaking with excitement. "Their condition is a finality; we will not allow the subject of emancipation to be discussed, even."

"Then, God have mercy on you!" said Clayton, solemnly; "for it is my firm belief that, in resisting the progress of human freedom, you will be found fighting against God."

"It is n't the cause of human freedom," said Mr. Knapp, hastily. "They are not human; they are an inferior race, made expressly for subjection and servitude. The Bible teaches this plainly."

"Why don't you teach them to read it, then?" said Clayton, coolly.

"The long and the short of the matter is, Mr. Clayton," said Mr. Knapp, walking nervously up and down the room, "you'll find this is not a matter to be trifled with. We come, as your friends, to warn you; and, if you don't listen to our warnings, we shall not hold ourselves responsible for what may follow. You ought to have some consideration for your sister, if not for yourself."

"I confess," said Clayton, "I had done the chivalry of South Carolina the honor to think that a lady could have nothing to fear."

"It is so generally," said Judge Oliver, "but on this sub-

ject there is such a dreadful excitability in the public mind, that we cannot control it. You remember, when the commissioner was sent by the Legislature of Massachusetts to Charleston, he came with his daughter, a very cultivated and elegant young lady; but the mob was rising, and we could not control it, and we had to go and beg them to leave the city. I, for one, would n't have been at all answerable for the consequences, if they had remained."

"I must confess, Judge Oliver," said Clayton, "that I have been surprised, this morning, to hear South Carolinians palliating two such events in your history, resulting from mob violence, as the breaking open of the post-office, and the insult to the representative of a sister state, who came in the most peaceable and friendly spirit, and to womanhood in the person of an accomplished lady. Is this hydra-headed monster, the mob, to be our governor?"

"O, it is only upon this subject," said all three of the gentlemen, at once; "this subject is exceptional."

"And do you think," said Clayton, "that

'————— you can set the land on fire,
To burn just so high, and no higher'?

You may depend upon it you will find that you cannot. The mob that you smile on and encourage when it does work that suits you, will one day prove itself your master in a manner that you will not like."

"Well, now, Mr. Clayton," said Mr. Bradshaw, who had not hitherto spoken, "you see this is a very disagreeable subject; but the fact is, we came in a friendly way to you. We all appreciate, personally, the merits of your character, and the excellence of your motives; but, really sir, there is an excitement rising, there is a state of the public mind which is getting every day more and more inflammable. I talked with Miss Anne on this subject, some months ago, and expressed my feelings very fully; and now, if you will only give us a pledge that you will pursue a different course, we shall have something to take hold of to quiet the

popular mind. If you will just write and stop your paper for the present, and let it be understood that your plantation system is to be stopped, the thing will gradually cool itself off."

"Gentlemen," said Clayton, "you are asking a very serious thing from me, and one which requires reflection. If I am violating the direct laws of the state, and these laws are to be considered as still in vital force, there is certainly some question with regard to my course; but still I have responsibilities for the moral and religious improvement of those under my care, which are equally binding. I see no course but removal from the state."

"Of course, we should be sorry," said Judge Oliver, "you should be obliged to do that; still we trust you will see the necessity, and our motives."

"Necessity is the tyrant's plea, I believe," said Clayton, smiling.

"At all events, it is a strong one," replied Judge Oliver, smiling also. "But I am glad we have had this conversation; I think it will enable me to pacify the minds of some of our hot-headed young neighbors, and prevent threatened mischief."

After a little general conversation, the party separated on apparently friendly terms, and Clayton went to seek counsel with his sister and Frank Russel.

Anne was indignant, with that straight-out and generous indignation which belongs to women, who, generally speaking, are ready to follow their principles to any result with more inconsiderate fearlessness than men. She had none of the anxieties for herself which Clayton had for her. Having once been witness of the brutalities of a slave-mob, Clayton could not, without a shudder, connect any such possibilities with his sister.

"I think," said Anne, "we had better give up this miserable sham of a free government, of freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and all that, if things must go on in this way."

"O," said Frank Russel, "the fact is that our republic, in these states, is like that of Venice ; it's not a democracy, but an oligarchy, and the mob is its standing army. We are, all of us, under the ' Council of Ten,' which has its eyes everywhere. We are free enough as long as our actions please them ; when they don't, we shall find their noose around our necks. It's very edifying, certainly, to have these gentlemen call on you to tell you that they will not be answerable for consequences of excitement which they are all the time stirring up ; for, after all, who cares what you do, if they don't ? The large proprietors are the ones interested. The rabble are their hands, and this warning about popular excitement just means, ' Sir, if you don't take care, I shall let out my dogs, and then I won't be answerable for consequences.' "

"And you call this liberty !" said Anne, indignantly.

"O, well," said Russel, "this is a world of humbugs. We call it liberty because it's an agreeable name. After all, what is liberty, that people make such a breeze about ? We are all slaves to one thing or another. Nobody is absolutely free, except Robinson Crusoe, in the desolate island ; and he tears all his shirts to pieces and hangs them up as signals of distress, that he may get back into slavery again."

"For all that," said Anne, warming, "I know there is such a thing as liberty. All that nobleness and enthusiasm which has animated people in all ages for liberty cannot be in vain. Who does not thrill at those words of the Marseillaise :

'O, Liberty, can men resign thee,
Once having felt thy generous flame ?
Can dungeons, bolts, or bars, confine thee,
Or whips thy noble spirit tame ?' "

"These are certainly agreeable myths," said Russel, "but these things will not bear any close looking into. Liberty has generally meant the liberty of me and my na-

tion and my class to do what we please ; which is a very pleasant thing, certainly, to those who are on the upper side of the wheel, and probably involving much that's disagreeable to those who are under."

"That is a heartless, unbelieving way of talking," said Anne, with tears in her eyes. "I know there have been some right true, noble souls, in whom the love of liberty has meant the love of right, and the desire that every human brother should have what rightly belongs to him. It is not *my* liberty, nor *our* liberty, but the *principle* of liberty itself, that they strove for."

"Such a principle, carried out logically, would make smashing work in this world," said Russel. "In this sense, where is there a free government on earth? What nation ever does or ever did respect the right of the weaker, or ever will, till the millennium comes? — and that's too far off to be of much use in practical calculations ; so don't let's break our hearts about a name. For my part, I am more concerned about these implied threats. As I said before, 'the hand of Joab is in this thing.' Tom Gordon is visiting in this neighborhood, and you may depend upon it that this, in some way, comes from him. He is a perfectly reckless fellow, and I am afraid of some act of violence. If he should bring up a mob, whatever they do, there will be no redress for you. These respectable gentlemen, your best friends, will fold their hands, and say, 'Ah, poor fellow ! we told him so !' while others will put their hands complacently in their pockets, and say, 'Served him right !'

"I think," said Clayton, "there will be no immediate violence. I understood that they pledged as much when they departed."

"If Tom Gordon is in the camp," said Russel, "they may find that they have reckoned without their host in promising that. There are two or three young fellows in this vicinity who, with his energy to direct them, are reckless enough for anything ; and there is always an abundance of excitable rabble to be got for a drink of whiskey."

The event proved that Russel was right. Anne's bedroom was in the back part of the cottage, opposite the little grove where stood her school-room.

She was awakened, about one o'clock, that night, by a broad, ruddy glare of light, which caused her at first to start from her bed, with the impression that the house was on fire.

At the same instant she perceived that the air was full of barbarous and dissonant sounds, such as the beating of tin pans, the braying of horns, and shouts of savage merriment, intermingled with slang oaths and curses.

In a moment, recovering herself, she perceived that it was her school-house which was in a blaze, crisping and shrivelling the foliage of the beautiful trees by which it was surrounded, and filling the air with a lurid light.

She hastily dressed, and in a few moments Clayton and Russel knocked at her door. Both were looking very pale.

"Don't be alarmed," said Clayton, putting his arm around her with that manner which shows that there is everything to fear; "I am going out to speak to them."

"Indeed, you are going to do no such thing," said Frank Russel, decidedly. "This is no time for any extra displays of heroism. These men are insane with whiskey and excitement. They have probably been especially inflamed against you, and your presence would irritate them still more. Let me go out: I understand the *ignobile vulgus* better than you do; besides which, providentially, I have n't any conscience to prevent my saying and doing what is necessary for an emergency. You shall see me lead off this whole yelling pack at my heels in triumph. And now, Clayton, you take care of Anne, like a good fellow, till I come back, which may be about four or five o'clock to-morrow morning. I shall toll all these fellows down to Muggins', and leave them so drunk they cannot stand for one three hours."

So saying, Frank proceeded hastily to disguise himself in a shaggy old great coat, and to tie around his throat a red bandanna silk handkerchief, with a very fiery and dashing

tie, and surmounting these equipments by an old hat which had belonged to one of the servants, he stole out of the front door, and, passing around through the shrubbery, was very soon lost in the throng who surrounded the burning building. He soon satisfied himself that Tom Gordon was not personally among them, — that they consisted entirely of the lower class of whites.

“So far, so good,” he said to himself, and, springing on to the stump of a tree, he commenced a speech in that peculiar slang dialect which was vernacular with them, and of which he perfectly well understood the use.

With his quick and ready talent for drollery, he soon had them around him in paroxysms of laughter; and, complimenting their bravery, flattering and cajoling their vanity, he soon got them completely in his power, and they assented, with a triumphant shout, to the proposition that they should go down and celebrate their victory at Muggins’ grocery, a low haunt about a mile distant, whither, as he predicted, they all followed him. And he was as good as his word in not leaving them till all were so completely under the power of liquor as to be incapable of mischief for the time being.

About nine o’clock the next day he returned, finding Clayton and Anne seated together at breakfast.

“Now, Clayton,” he said, seating himself, “I am going to talk to you in good, solemn earnest, for once. The fact is, you are checkmated. Your plans for gradual emancipation, or reform, or anything tending in that direction, are utterly hopeless; and, if you want to pursue them with your own people, you must either send them to Liberia, or to the Northern States. There was a time, fifty years ago, when such things were contemplated with some degree of sincerity by all the leading minds at the South. That time is over. From the very day that they began to open new territories to slavery, the value of this kind of property mounted up, so as to make emancipation a moral impossibility. It is, as they told you, a *finality*; and don’t you see

how they make everything in the Union bend to it? Why, these men are only about three tenths of the population of our Southern States, and yet the other seven tenths virtually have no existence. All they do is to vote as they are told — as they know they must, being too ignorant to know any better.

“The mouth of the North is stuffed with cotton, and will be kept full as long as it suits us. Good, easy gentlemen, they are so satisfied with their pillows, and other accommodations inside of the car, that they don’t trouble themselves to reflect that we are the engineers, nor to ask where we are going. And, when any one does wake up and pipe out in melancholy inquiry, we slam the door in his face, and tell him ‘Mind your own business, sir,’ and he leans back on his cotton pillow, and goes to sleep again, only whimpering a little, that ‘we might be more polite.’

“They have their fanatics up there. We don’t trouble ourselves to put them down; we make them do it. They get up mobs on our account, to hoot troublesome ministers and editors out of their cities; and their men that they send to Congress invariably do all our dirty work. There’s now and then an exception, it is true; but they only prove the rule.

“If there was any public sentiment at the North for you reformers to fall back upon, you might, in spite of your difficulties, do something; but there is not. They are all implicated with us, except the class of born fanatics, like you, who are walking in that very unfashionable narrow way we’ve heard of.”

“Well,” said Anne, “let us go out of the state, then. I will go anywhere; but I will not stop the work that I have begun.”

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FLIGHT.

THE party of fugitives, which started for the North, was divided into two bands. Harry, Lisette, Tiff, and his two children, assumed the character of a family, of whom Harry took the part of father, Lisette the nurse, and Tiff the manservant.

The money which Clayton had given them enabling them to furnish a respectable outfit, they found no difficulty in taking passage under this character, at Norfolk, on board a small coasting-vessel bound to New York.

Never had Harry known a moment so full of joyous security as that which found him out at sea in a white-winged vessel, flying with all speed toward the distant port of safety.

Before they neared the coast of New York, however, there was a change in their prospects. The blue sky became darkened, and the sea, before so treacherously smooth, began to rise in furious waves. The little vessel was tossed baffling about by contrary and tumultuous winds.

When she began to pitch and roll, in all the violence of a decided storm, Lisette and the children cried for fear. Old Tiff exerted himself for their comfort to the best of his ability. Seated on the cabin-floor, with his feet firmly braced, he would hold the children in his arms, and remind them of what Miss Nina had read to them of the storm that came down on the Lake of Gennesareth, and how

Jesus was in the hinder part of the boat, asleep on a pillow. "And he's dar yet," Tiff would say.

"I wish they'd wake him up, then," said Teddy, disconsolately; "I don't like this dreadful noise! What does he let it be so for?"

Before the close of that day the fury of the storm increased; and the horrors of that night can only be told by those who have felt the like. The plunging of the vessel, the creaking and straining of the timbers, the hollow and sepulchral sound of waves striking against the hull, and the shiver with which, like a living creature, she seemed to tremble at every shock, were things frightful even to the experienced sailor; much more so to our trembling refugees.

The morning dawned only to show the sailors their bark drifting helplessly toward a fatal shore, whose name is a sound of evil omen to seamen.

It was not long before the final crash came, and the ship was wedged among rugged rocks, washed over every moment by the fury of the waves.

All hands came now on deck for the last chance of life. One boat after another was attempted to be launched, but was swamped by the furious waters. When the last boat was essayed, there was a general rush of all on board. It was the last chance for life. In such hours the instinctive fear of death often overbears every other consideration; and the boat was rapidly filled by the hands of the ship, who, being strongest and most accustomed to such situations, were more able to effect this than the passengers. The captain alone remained standing on the wreck, and with him Harry, Lisette, Tiff, and the children.

"Pass along," said the captain, hastily pressing Lisette on board, simply because she was the first that came to hand.

"For de good Lord's sake," said Tiff, "put de chil'en on board; dere won't be no room for me, and 't an't no matter! You go 'board and take care of 'em," he said, pushing Harry along.

Harry mechanically sprang into the boat, and the captain after him. The boat was full.

"O, do take poor Tiff — do!" said the children, stretching their hands after their old friend.

"Clear away, boys, — the boat's full!" shouted a dozen voices; and the boat parted from the wreck, and sunk in eddies and whirls of boiling waves, foam, and spray, and went, rising and sinking, onward driven toward the shore.

A few, looking backwards, saw a mighty green wave come roaring and shaking its crested head, lift the hull as if it had been an egg-shell, then dash it in fragments upon the rocks. This was all they knew, till they were themselves cast, wet and dripping, but still living, upon the sands.

A crowd of people were gathered upon the shore, who, with the natural kindness of humanity on such occasions, gathered the drenched and sea-beaten wanderers into neighboring cottages, where food and fire, and changes of dry clothing, awaited them.

The children excited universal sympathy and attention, and so many mothers of the neighborhood came bringing offerings of clothing, that their lost wardrobe was soon very tolerably replaced. But nothing could comfort them for the loss of their old friend. In vain the "little dears" were tempted with offers of cake and custard, and every imaginable eatable. They sat with their arms around each other, quietly weeping.

No matter how unsightly the casket may be which holds all the love there is on earth for us, be that love lodged in the heart of the poorest and most uneducated, the whole world can offer no exchange for the loss of it.

Tiff's devotion to these children had been so constant, so provident, so absolute, that it did not seem to them possible they could live a day without him; and the desolation of their lot seemed to grow upon them every hour. Nothing would restrain them. They would go out and look up

and down, if, perhaps, they might meet him; but they searched in vain. And Harry, who had attended them, led them back again, disconsolate.

"I say, Fanny," said Teddy, after they had said their prayers, and laid down in their little bed, "has Tiff gone to heaven?"

"Certainly he has," said Fanny, "if ever anybody went there."

"Won't he come and bring us pretty soon?" said Teddy. "He won't want to be there without us, will he?"

"O, I don't know," said Fanny. "I wish we could go; the world is so lonesome!"

And, thus talking, the children fell asleep. But it is written in an ancient record, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning;" and, verily, the next morning Teddy started up in bed, and awakened his sister with a cry of joy.

"O, Fanny! Fanny! Tiff is n't dead! I heard him laughing."

Fanny started up, and, sure enough, there came through the partition which separated their little sleeping-room from the kitchen a sound very much like Tiff's old, unctuous laugh.

One would have thought no other pair of lungs could have rolled out the jolly Ho, ho, ho, with such a joyous fulness of intonation.

The children hastily put on their clothes, and opened the door.

"Why, bress de Lord! poppets, here dey is, sure 'nough! Ho! ho! ho!" said Tiff, stretching out his arms, while both the children ran and hung upon him.

"O, Tiff, we are so glad! O, we thought you was drowned; we've been thinking so all night."

"No, no, no, bress de Lord! You don't get shet of Ole Tiff dat ar way! Won't get shet him till ye's fetched up, and able to do for yerselves."

"O, Tiff, how did you get away?"

"Laws! why, chil'ens, 't was a very strait way. I told de Lord 'bout it. Says I, 'Good Lord, you knows I don't car nothing 'bout it on my own 'count; but 'pears like dese chil'en is so young and tender, I could n't leave dem, no way;' and so I axed him if he would n't jest please to help me, 'cause I knowed he had de power of de winds and de sea. Well, sure 'nough, dat ar big wave toted me clar up right on de sho'; but it tuk my breff and my senses so I did n't farly know whar I was. And de peoples dat foun' me took me a good bit 'way to a house down here, and dey was 'mazing good to me, and rubbed me wid de hot flannels, and giv me one ting and anoder, so 't I woke up quite peart dis mornin', and came out to look up my poppets; 'cause, yer see, it was kinder borne in on my mind dat I should find you. And now yer see, chil'en, you mark my words, de Lord ben wid us in six troubles, and in seven, and he 'll bring us to good luck yet. Tell ye, de sea han't washed dat ar out o' me, for all its banging and bruising." And Tiff chuckled in the fulness of his heart, and made a joyful noise.

His words were so far accomplished that, before many days, the little party, rested and refreshed, and with the losses of their wardrobe made up by friendly contributions, found themselves under the roof of some benevolent friends in New York.

Thither, in due time, the other detachment of their party arrived, which had come forward under the guidance of Hannibal, by ways and means which, as they may be wanted for others in like circumstances, we shall not further particularize.

Harry, by the kind patronage of friends, soon obtained employment, which placed him and his wife in a situation of comfort.

Milly and her grandson, and Old Tiff and his children, were enabled to hire a humble tenement together; and she, finding employment as a pastry-cook in a confectioner's establishment, was able to provide a very comfortable

support, while Tiff presided in the housekeeping department.

After a year or two an event occurred of so romantic a nature, that, had we not ascertained it as a positive fact, we should hesitate to insert it in our veracious narrative.

Fanny's mother had an aunt in the Peyton family, a maiden lady of very singular character, who, by habits of great penuriousness, had amassed a large fortune, apparently for no other purpose than that it should, some day, fall into the hands of somebody who would know how to enjoy it.

Having quarrelled, shortly before her death, with all her other relatives, she cast about in her mind for ways and means to revenge herself on them, by placing her property out of their disposal.

She accordingly made a will, bequeathing it to the heirs of her niece Susan, if any such heirs existed; and if not, the property was to go to an orphan asylum.

By chance, the lawyer's letter of inquiry was addressed to Clayton, who immediately took the necessary measures to identify the children, and put them in possession of the property.

Tiff now was glorious. "He always knowed it," he said, "dat Miss Sue's chil'en would come to luck, and dat de Lord would open a door for them, and he had."

Fanny, who was now a well-grown girl of twelve years, chose Clayton as her guardian; and, by his care, she was placed at one of the best New England schools, where her mind and her person developed rapidly.

Her brother was placed at school in the same town.

As for Clayton, after some inquiry and consideration, he bought a large and valuable tract of land in that portion of Canada where the climate is least severe, and the land the most valuable for culture.

To this place he removed his slaves, and formed there a township, which is now one of the richest and finest in the region.

Here he built for himself a beautiful residence, where he and his sister live happily together, finding their enjoyment in the improvement of those by whom they are surrounded.

It is a striking comment on the success of Clayton's enterprise, that the neighboring white settlers, who at first looked coldly upon him, fearing he would be the means of introducing a thriftless population among them, have been entirely won over, and that the value of the improvements which Clayton and his tenants have made has nearly doubled the price of real estate in the vicinity.

So high a character have his schools borne, that the white settlers in the vicinity have discontinued their own, preferring to have their children enjoy the advantages of those under his and his sister's patronage and care.*

Harry is one of the head men of the settlement, and is rapidly acquiring property and consideration in the community.

A large farm, waving with some acres of fine wheat, with its fences and out-houses in excellent condition, marks the energy and thrift of Hannibal, who, instead of slaying men, is great in felling trees and clearing forests.

He finds time, winter evenings, to read, with "none to molest or make afraid." His oldest son is construing Cæsar's Commentaries at school, and often reads his lesson of an evening to his delighted father, who willingly resigns the palm of scholarship into his hands.

As to our merry friend Jim, he is the life of the settlement. Liberty, it is true, has made him a little more sober; and a very energetic and capable wife, soberer still; but yet Jim has enough and to spare of drollery, which makes him an indispensable requisite in all social gatherings.

He works on his farm with energy, and repels with indignation any suggestion that he was happier in the old times, when he had abundance of money, and very little to do.

* These statements are all true of the Elgin settlement, founded by Mr. King, a gentleman who removed and settled his slaves in the south of Canada.

One suggestion more we almost hesitate to make, lest it should give rise to unfounded reports; but we are obliged to speak the truth.

Anne Clayton, on a visit to a friend's family in New Hampshire, met with Livy Ray, of whom she had heard Nina speak so much, and very naturally the two ladies fell into a most intimate friendship; visits were exchanged between them, and Clayton, on first introduction, discovered the lady he had met in the prison in Alexandria.

The most intimate friendship exists between the three, and, of course, in such cases reports will arise; but we assure our readers we have never heard of any authentic foundation for them; so that, in this matter, we can clearly leave every one to predict a result according to their own fancies.

We have now two sketches, with which the scenery of our book must close.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CLEAR SHINING AFTER RAIN.

CLAYTON had occasion to visit New York on business.

He never went without carrying some token of remembrance from the friends in his settlement to Milly, now indeed far advanced in years, while yet, in the expressive words of Scripture, "her eye was not dim, nor her natural force abated."

He found her in a neat little tenement in one of the outer streets of New York, surrounded by about a dozen children, among whom were blacks, whites, and foreigners. These she had rescued from utter destitution in the streets, and was giving to them all the attention and affection of a mother.

"Why, bless you, sir," she said to him, pleasantly, as he opened the door, "it's good to see you once more! How is Miss Anne?"

"Very well, Milly. She sent you this little packet; and you will find something from Harry and Lisette, and all the rest of your friends in our settlement. — Ah! are these all your children, Milly?"

"Yes, honey; mine and de Lord's. Dis yer's my second dozen. De fust is all in good places, and doing well. I keeps my eye on 'em, and goes round to see after 'em a little, now and then."

"And how is Tomtit?"

"O, Tomtit's doing beautiful, thank 'e, sir. He's 'come a Christian, and jined the church; and they has him to wait and tend at the anti-slavery office, and he does *well*."

"I see you have black and white here," said Clayton,

glancing around the circle. "Laws, yes," said Milly, looking complacently around; "I don't make no distinctions of color, — I don't believe in them. White chil'en, when they 'haves themselves, is jest as good as black, and I loves 'em jest as well."

"Don't you sometimes think it a little hard you should have to work so in your old age?"

"Why, bress you, honey, no! I takes comfort of my money as I goes along. Dere's a heap in me yet," she said, laughing. "I's hoping to get dis yer batch put out and take in anoder afore I die. You see," she said, "dis yer's de way I took to get my heart whole. I found it was getting so sore for my chil'en I'd had took from me, 'pears like the older I grow'd the more I thought about 'em; but long's I keeps doing for chil'en it kinder eases it. I calls 'em all mine; so I's got good many chil'en now."

We will inform our reader, in passing, that Milly, in the course of her life, on the humble wages of a laboring woman, took from the streets, brought up, and placed in reputable situations, no less than *forty* destitute children.*

When Clayton returned to Boston, he received a note written in a graceful female hand, from Fanny, expressing her gratitude for his kindness to her and her brother, and begging that he would come and spend a day with them at their cottage in the vicinity of the city. Accordingly, eight o'clock the next morning found him whirling in the cars through green fields and pleasant meadows, garlanded with flowers and draped with bending elms, to one of those peaceful villages which lie like pearls on the bosom of our fair old mother, Massachusetts.

Stopping at — station, he inquired his way up to a little eminence which commanded a view of one of those charming lakes which open their blue eyes everywhere

* These circumstances are true of an old colored woman in New York, known by the name of Aunt Katy, who in her youth was a slave, and who is said to have established among these destitute children the first Sunday-school in the city of New York.

through the New England landscape. Here, embowered in blossoming trees, stood a little Gothic cottage, a perfect gem of rural irregularity and fanciful beauty. A porch in the front of it was supported on pillars of cedar, with the rough bark still on, around which were trained multitudes of climbing roses, now in full flower. From the porch a rustic bridge led across a little ravine into a summer-house, which was built like a nest into the branches of a great oak which grew up from the hollow below the knoll on which the house stood.

A light form, dressed in a pretty white wrapper, came fluttering across the bridge, as Clayton ascended the steps of the porch. Perhaps our readers may recognize in the smoothly-parted brown hair, the large blue eyes, and the bashful earnestness of the face, our sometime little friend Fanny; if they do not, we think they'll be familiar with the cheery "ho, ho, ho," which comes from the porch, as our old friend Tiff, dressed in a respectable suit of black, comes bowing forward. "Bress de Lord, Mas'r Clayton, — it's good for de eyes to look at you! So, you's come to see Miss Fanny, now she's come to her property, and has got de place she ought for to have. Ah, ah! — Old Tiff allers know'd it! He seed it — he know'd de Lord would bring her out right, and he did. Ho! ho! ho!"

"Yes," said Fanny, "and I sometimes think I don't enjoy it half as well as Uncle Tiff. I'm sure he ought to have some comfort of us, for he worked hard enough for us, — did n't you, Uncle Tiff?"

"Work! bress your soul, did n't I?" said Tiff, giggling all over in cheerful undulations. "Reckon I has worked, though I does n't have much of it to do now; but I sees good of my work now'days, — does so. Mas'r Teddy, he's grow'd up tall, han'some young gen'leman, and he's in college, — only tink of dat! Laws! he can make de Latin fly! Dis yer's pretty good country, too. Dere's families round here dat's e'enamost up to old Virginny; and she goes with de best on 'em — dat she does."

Fanny now led Clayton into the house, and, while she tripped up stairs to change her morning dress, Tiff busied himself in arranging cake and fruit on a silver salver, as an apology for remaining in the room.

He seemed to consider the interval as an appropriate one for making some confidential communications on a subject that lay very near his heart. So, after looking out of the door with an air of great mystery, to ascertain that Miss Fanny was really gone, he returned to Clayton, and touched him on the elbow with an air of infinite secrecy and precaution.

“Dis yer an’t to be spoke of out loud,” he said. “I’s ben mighty anxious; but, bress de Lord, I’s come safely through; ’cause, yer see, I’s found out he’s a right likely man, beside being one of de very fustest old families in de state; and dese yer old families here ’bout as good as dey was in Virginny; and, when all’s said and done, it’s de men dat’s de ting, after all; ’cause a gal can’t marry all de generations back, if dey’s ever so nice. But he’s one of your likeliest men.”

“What’s his name?” said Clayton.

“Russel,” said Tiff, lifting up his hand apprehensively to his mouth, and shouting out the name in a loud whisper. “I reckon he’ll be here to-day, ’cause Mas’r Teddy’s coming home, and going to bring him wid him; so please, Mas’r Clayton, you won’t notice nothing; ’cause Miss Fanny, she’s jest like her ma,—she’ll turn red clar up to her har, if a body only looks at her. See here,” said Tiff, fumbling in his pocket, and producing a spectacle-case, out of which he extracted a portentous pair of gold-mounted spectacles; “see what he give me, de last time he’s here. I puts dese yer on of a Sundays, when I sets down to read my Bible.”

“Indeed,” said Clayton; “have you learned, then, to read?”

“Why, no, honey, I don’t no as I can rightly say dat I’s larn’d to read, ’cause I’s ’mazing slow at dat ar; but, den,

I's larn'd all de best words, like Christ, Lord, and God, and dem ar; and whar dey's pretty thick, I makes out quite comfortable."

We shall not detain our readers with minute descriptions of how the day was spent: how Teddy came home from college a tall, handsome fellow, and rattled over Latin and Greek sentences in Tiff's delighted ears, who considered his learning as, without doubt, the eighth wonder of the world; nor how George Russel came with him, a handsome senior, just graduated; nor how Fanny blushed and trembled when she told her guardian her little secret, and, like other ladies, asked advice after she had made up her mind.

Nor shall we dilate on the yet brighter glories of the cottage three months after, when Clayton, and Anne, and Livy Ray, were all at the wedding, and Tiff became three and four times blessed in this brilliant consummation of his hopes. The last time we saw him he was walking forth in magnificence, his gold spectacles set conspicuously astride of his nose, trundling a little wicker wagon, which cradled a fair, pearly little Miss Fanny, whom he informed all beholders was "de very sperit of de Peytons."

APPENDIX I.

NAT TURNER'S CONFESSIONS.

As an illustration of the character and views ascribed to Dred, we make a few extracts from the Confessions of Nat Turner, as published by T. R. Gray, Esq., of Southampton, Virginia, in November, 1831. One of the principal conspirators in this affair was named Dred.

We will first give the certificate of the court, and a few sentences from Mr. Gray's introductory remarks, and then proceed with Turner's own narrative.

“ We, the undersigned, members of the court convened at Jerusalem, on Saturday, the fifth day of November, 1831, for the trial of Nat, *alias* Nat Turner, a negro slave, late the property of Putnam Moore, deceased, do hereby certify, that the confession of Nat, to Thomas R. Gray, was read to him in our presence, and that Nat acknowledged the same to be full, free, and voluntary ; and that furthermore, when called upon by the presiding magistrate of the court to state if he had anything to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon him, replied he had nothing further than he had communicated to Mr. Gray. Given under our hands and seals at Jerusalem, this fifth day of November, 1831.

JEREMIAH COBB, (*Seal.*)

THOMAS PRETLOW, (*Seal.*)

JAMES W. PARKER, (*Seal.*)

CARR BOWERS, (*Seal.*)

SAMUEL B. HINES, (*Seal.*)

ORRIS A. BROWNE, (*Seal.*)”

“ *State of Virginia, Southampton County, to wit:*

“ I, James Rochelle, Clerk of the County Court of Southampton, in the State of Virginia, do hereby certify, that Jeremiah Cobb, Thomas Pretlow, James W. Parker, Carr Bowers, Samuel B. Hines, and Orris A. Browne, Esqrs., are acting justices of the peace in and for the county aforesaid ; and were members of the court which convened at Jerusalem, on Saturday, the fifth day of November, 1831, for the trial of Nat, *alias* Nat Turner, a negro slave, late the property of Putnam Moore, deceased, who was tried

and convicted, as an insurgent in the late insurrection in the County of Southampton aforesaid, and that full faith and credit are due and ought to be given to their acts as justices of the peace aforesaid.

(*Seal.*)

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the court aforesaid to be affixed, this fifth day of November, 1831.

JAMES ROCHELLE, C. S. C. C."

"Everything connected with this sad affair was wrapt in mystery, until NAT TURNER, the leader of this ferocious band, whose name has resounded throughout our widely-extended empire, was captured.

"Since his confinement, by permission of the jailer, I have had ready access to him ; and, finding that he was willing to make a full and free confession of the origin, progress, and consummation, of the insurrectory movements of the slaves, of which he was the contriver and head, I determined, for the gratification of public curiosity, to commit his statements to writing, and publish them, with little or no variation, from his own words.

"He was not only the contriver of the conspiracy, but gave the first blow towards its execution.

"It will thus appear, that whilst everything upon the surface of society wore a calm and peaceful aspect, whilst not one note of preparation was heard to warn the devoted inhabitants of woe and death, a gloomy fanatic was revolving in the recesses of his own dark, bewildered, and overwrought mind, schemes of indiscriminate massacre to the whites. Schemes too fearfully executed, as far as his fiendish band proceeded in their desolating march. No cry for mercy penetrated their flinty bosoms. No acts of remembered kindness made the least impression upon these remorseless murderers. Men, women, and children, from hoary age to helpless infancy, were involved in the same cruel fate. Never did a band of savages do their work of death more unsparingly.

"Nat has survived all his followers, and the gallows will speedily close his career. His own account of the conspiracy is submitted to the public, without comment. It reads an awful, and, it is hoped, a useful lesson, as to the operations of a mind like his, endeavoring to grapple with things beyond its reach. How it first became bewildered and confounded, and finally corrupted and led to the conception and perpetration of the most atrocious and heartrending deeds.

"If Nat's statements can be relied on, the insurrection in this county was entirely local, and his designs confided but to a few, and these in his immediate vicinity. It was not instigated by motives of revenge or sudden anger ; but the result of long deliberation, and a settled purpose of mind — the offspring of gloomy fanaticism acting upon materials but too well prepared for such impressions."

“I was thirty-one years of age the second of October last, and born the property of Benjamin Turner, of this county. In my childhood a circumstance occurred which made an indelible impression on my mind, and laid the groundwork of that enthusiasm which has terminated so fatally to many, both white and black, and for which I am about to atone at the gallows. It is here necessary to relate this circumstance. Trifling as it may seem, it was the commencement of that belief which has grown with time ; and even now, sir, in this dungeon, helpless and forsaken as I am, I cannot divest myself of. Being at play with other children, when three or four years old, I was telling them something, which my mother, overhearing, said it had happened before I was born. I stuck to my story, however, and related some things which went, in her opinion, to confirm it. Others being called on, were greatly astonished, knowing that these things had happened, and caused them to say, in my hearing, I surely would be a prophet, as the Lord had shown me things that had happened before my birth. And my father and mother strengthened me in this my first impression, saying, in my presence, I was intended for some great purpose, which they had always thought from certain marks on my head and breast. (A parcel of excrescences, which, I believe, are not at all uncommon, particularly among negroes, as I have seen several with the same. In this case he has either cut them off, or they have nearly disappeared.)

“My grandmother, who was very religious, and to whom I was much attached — my master, who belonged to the church, and other religious persons who visited the house, and whom I often saw at prayers, noticing the singularity of my manners, I suppose, and my uncommon intelligence for a child, remarked I had too much sense to be raised, and, if I was, I would never be of any service to any one as a slave. To a mind like mine, restless, inquisitive, and observant of everything that was passing, it is easy to suppose that religion was the subject to which it would be directed ; and, although this subject principally occupied my thoughts, there was nothing that I saw or heard of to which my attention was not directed. The manner in which I learned to read and write, not only had great influence on my own mind, as I acquired it with the most perfect ease, — so much so, that I have no recollection whatever of learning the alphabet ; but, to the astonishment of the family, one day, when a book was shown me, to keep me from crying, I began spelling the names of different objects. This was a source of wonder to all in the neighborhood, particularly the blacks — and this learning was constantly improved at all opportunities. When I got large enough to go to work, while employed I was reflecting on many things that would present themselves to my imagination ; and whenever an opportunity occurred of looking at a book, when the school-children were getting their lessons, I would find many things that the fertility of my own imagination had depicted to me before. All my time, not devoted to my master's service, was spent either in prayer, or in making experiments

in casting different things in moulds made of earth, in attempting to make paper, gunpowder, and many other experiments, that, although I could not perfect, yet convinced me of its practicability if I had the means.*

“I was not addicted to stealing in my youth, nor have ever been ; yet such was the confidence of the negroes in the neighborhood, even at this early period of my life, in my superior judgment, that they would often carry me with them when they were going on any roguery, to plan for them. Growing up among them with this confidence in my superior judgment, and when this, in their opinions, was perfected by Divine inspiration, from the circumstances already alluded to in my infancy, and which belief was ever afterwards zealously inculcated by the austerity of my life and manners, which became the subject of remark by white and black ; having soon discovered to be great, I must appear so, and therefore studiously avoided mixing in society, and wrapped myself in mystery, devoting my time to fasting and prayer.

“By this time, having arrived to man’s estate, and hearing the Scriptures commented on at meetings, I was struck with that particular passage which says, ‘Seek ye the kingdom of heaven, and all things shall be added unto you.’ I reflected much on this passage, and prayed daily for light on this subject. As I was praying one day at my plough, the Spirit spoke to me, saying, ‘Seek ye the kingdom of heaven, and all things shall be added unto you.’ *Question.* ‘What do you mean by the Spirit?’ *Answer.* ‘The Spirit that spoke to the prophets in former days,’ —and I was greatly astonished, and for two years prayed continually, whenever my duty would permit ; and then again I had the same revelation, which fully confirmed me in the impression that I was ordained for some great purpose in the hands of the Almighty. Several years rolled round, in which many events occurred to strengthen me in this my belief. At this time I reverted in my mind to the remarks made of me in my childhood, and the things that had been shown me ; and as it had been said of me in my childhood, by those by whom I had been taught to pray, both white and black, and in whom I had the greatest confidence, that I had too much sense to be raised, and if I was I would never be of any use to any one as a slave ; now, finding I had arrived to man’s estate, and was a slave, and these revelations being made known to me, I began to direct my attention to this great object, to fulfil the purpose for which, by this time, I felt assured I was intended. Knowing the influence I had obtained over the minds of my fellow-servants — (not by the means of conjuring and such-like tricks — for to them I always spoke of such things with contempt), but by the communion of the Spirit, whose revelations I often communicated to them, and they believed and said my wisdom came from God, — I now began to

* When questioned as to the manner of manufacturing those different articles, he was found well informed.

prepare them for my purpose, by telling them something was about to happen that would terminate in fulfilling the great promise that had been made to me.

“About this time I was placed under an overseer, from whom I ran away, and, after remaining in the woods thirty days, I returned, to the astonishment of the negroes on the plantation, who thought I had made my escape to some other part of the country, as my father had done before. But the reason of my return was, that the Spirit appeared to me and said I had my wishes directed to the things of this world, and not to the kingdom of heaven, and that I should return to the service of my earthly master — ‘For he who knoweth his Master’s will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, and thus have I chastened you.’ And the negroes found fault, and murmured against me, saying that if they had my sense they would not serve any master in the world. And about this time I had a vision — and I saw white spirits and black spirits engaged in battle, and the sun was darkened — the thunder rolled in the heavens, and blood flowed in streams — and I heard a voice saying, ‘Such is your luck, such you are called to see; and let it come rough or smooth, you must surely bear it.’

“I now withdrew myself as much as my situation would permit from the intercourse of my fellow-servants, for the avowed purpose of serving the Spirit more fully; and it appeared to me, and reminded me of the things it had already shown me, and that it would then reveal to me the knowledge of the elements, the revolution of the planets, the operation of tides, and changes of the seasons. After this revelation in the year 1825, and the knowledge of the elements being made known to me, I sought more than ever to obtain true holiness before the great day of judgment should appear, and then I began to receive the true knowledge of faith. And from the first steps of righteousness until the last, was I made perfect; and the Holy Ghost was with me, and said, ‘Behold me as I stand in the heavens.’ And I looked and saw the forms of men in different attitudes; and there were lights in the sky, to which the children of darkness gave other names than what they really were; for they were the lights of the Saviour’s hands, stretched forth from east to west, even as they were extended on the cross on Calvary for the redemption of sinners. And I wondered greatly at these miracles, and prayed to be informed of a certainty of the meaning thereof; and shortly afterwards, while laboring in the field, I discovered drops of blood on the corn, as though it were dew from heaven; and I communicated it to many, both white and black, in the neighborhood — and I then found on the leaves in the woods hieroglyphic characters and numbers, with the forms of men in different attitudes, portrayed in blood, and representing the figures I had seen before in the heavens. And now the Holy Ghost had revealed itself to me, and made plain the miracles it had shown me; for as the blood of Christ had been shed on this earth, and had

ascended to heaven for the salvation of sinners, and was now returning to earth again in the form of dew,—and as the leaves on the trees bore the impression of the figures I had seen in the heavens,—it was plain to me that the Saviour was about to lay down the yoke he had borne for the sins of men, and the great day of judgment was at hand.

“About this time I told these things to a white man (Etheldred T. Brantley), on whom it had a wonderful effect ; and he ceased from his wickedness, and was attacked immediately with a cutaneous eruption, and blood oozed from the pores of his skin, and after praying and fasting nine days he was healed. And the Spirit appeared to me again, and said, as the Saviour had been baptized, so should we be also ; and when the white people would not let us be baptized by the church, we went down into the water together, in the sight of many who reviled us, and were baptized by the Spirit. After this I rejoiced greatly, and gave thanks to God. And on the 12th of May, 1828, I heard a loud noise in the heavens, and the Spirit instantly appeared to me and said the Serpent was loosened, and Christ had laid down the yoke he had borne for the sins of men, and that I should take it on and fight against the Serpent, for the time was fast approaching when the first should be last and the last should be first. *Ques.* ‘Do you not find yourself mistaken now?’—*Ans.* ‘Was not Christ crucified?’ And by signs in the heavens that it would make known to me when I should commence the great work, and until the first sign appeared I should conceal it from the knowledge of men ; and on the appearance of the sign (the eclipse of the sun, last February), I should arise and prepare myself, and slay my enemies with their own weapons. And immediately on the sign appearing in the heavens, the seal was removed from my lips, and I communicated the great work laid out for me to do, to four in whom I had the greatest confidence (Henry, Hark, Nelson, and Sam). It was intended by us to have begun the work of death on the 4th of July last. Many were the plans formed and rejected by us, and it affected my mind to such a degree that I fell sick, and the time passed without our coming to any determination how to commence—still forming new schemes and rejecting them, when the sign appeared again, which determined me not to wait longer.

“Since the commencement of 1830 I had been living with Mr. Joseph Travis, who was to me a kind master, and placed the greatest confidence in me ; in fact, I had no cause to complain of his treatment to me. On Saturday evening, the 20th of August, it was agreed between Henry, Hark, and myself, to prepare a dinner the next day for the men we expected, and then to concert a plan, as we had not yet determined on any. Hark, on the following morning, brought a pig, and Henry brandy ; and being joined by Sam, Nelson, Will, and Jack, they prepared in the woods a dinner, where, about three o’clock, I joined them.”

“Q. Why were you so backward in joining them?”

“*A.* The same reason that had caused me not to mix with them for years before.

“I saluted them on coming up, and asked Will how came he there. He answered, his life was worth no more than others, and his liberty as dear to him. I asked him if he thought to obtain it. He said he would, or lose his life. This was enough to put him in full confidence. Jack, I knew, was only a tool in the hands of Hark. It was quickly agreed we should commence a home (Mr. J. Travis’) on that night ; and until we had armed and equipped ourselves, and gathered sufficient force, neither age nor sex was to be spared — which was invariably adhered to. We remained at the feast until about two hours in the night, when we went to the house and found Austin.”

We will not go into the horrible details of the various massacres, but only make one or two extracts, to show the spirit and feelings of Turner :

“I then went to Mr. John T. Harrow’s ; they had been here and murdered him. I pursued on their track to Capt. Newit Harris’, where I found the greater part mounted and ready to start. The men, now amounting to about forty, shouted and hurraed as I rode up. Some were in the yard, loading their guns ; others drinking. They said Captain Harris and his family had escaped ; the property in the house they destroyed, robbing him of money and other valuables. I ordered them to mount and march instantly ; this was about nine or ten o’clock, Monday morning. I proceeded to Mr. Levi Waller’s, two or three miles distant. I took my station in the rear, and, as it was my object to carry terror and devastation wherever we went, I placed fifteen or twenty of the best armed and most to be relied on in front, who generally approached the houses as fast as their horses could run. This was for two purposes — to prevent their escape, and strike terror to the inhabitants ; on this account I never got to the houses, after leaving Mrs. Whitehead’s, until the murders were committed, except in one case. I sometimes got in sight in time to see the work of death completed ; viewed the mangled bodies as they lay, in silent satisfaction, and immediately started in quest of other victims. Having murdered Mrs. Waller and ten children, we started for Mr. Wm. Williams’, — having killed him and two little boys that were there ; while engaged in this, Mrs. Williams fled and got some distance from the house, but she was pursued, overtaken, and compelled to get up behind one of the company, who brought her back, and, after showing her the mangled body of her lifeless husband, she was told to get down and lay by his side, where she was shot dead.

“The white men pursued and fired on us several times. Hark had his horse shot under him, and I caught another for him as it was running by me ; five or six of my men were wounded, but none left on the field. Finding myself defeated here, I instantly determined to go through a private

way, and cross the Nottoway River at the Cypress Bridge, three miles below Jerusalem, and attack that place in the rear, as I expected they would look for me on the other road, and I had a great desire to get there to procure arms and ammunition. After going a short distance in this private way, accompanied by about twenty men, I overtook two or three, who told me the others were dispersed in every direction.

“On this, I gave up all hope for the present ; and on Thursday night, after having supplied myself with provisions from Mr. Travis’, I scratched a hole under a pile of fence-rails in a field, where I concealed myself for six weeks, never leaving my hiding-place but for a few minutes in the dead of the night to get water, which was very near. Thinking by this time I could venture out, I began to go about in the night, and eavesdrop the houses in the neighborhood ; pursuing this course for about a fortnight, and gathering little or no intelligence, afraid of speaking to any human being, and returning every morning to my cave before the dawn of day. I know not how long I might have led this life, if accident had not betrayed me. A dog in the neighborhood passing by my hiding-place one night while I was out, was attracted by some meat I had in my cave, and crawled in and stole it, and was coming out just as I returned. A few nights after, two negroes having started to go hunting with the same dog, and passed that way, the dog came again to the place, and having just gone out to walk about, discovered me and barked ; on which, thinking myself discovered, I spoke to them to beg concealment. On making myself known, they fled from me. Knowing then they would betray me, I immediately left my hiding-place, and was pursued almost incessantly, until I was taken, a fortnight afterwards, by Mr. Benjamin Phipps, in a little hole I had dug out with my sword, for the purpose of concealment, under the top of a fallen tree.

“During the time I was pursued, I had many hair-breadth escapes, which your time will not permit you to relate. I am here loaded with chains, and willing to suffer the fate that awaits me.”

Mr. Gray asked him if he knew of any extensive or concerted plan. His answer was, I do not. When I questioned him as to the insurrection in North Carolina happening about the same time, he denied any knowledge of it ; and when I looked him in the face, as though I would search his inmost thoughts, he replied, “I see, sir, you doubt my word ; but can you not think the same ideas, and strange appearances about this time in the heavens, might prompt others, as well as myself, to this undertaking ?” I now had much conversation with and asked him many questions, having forborne to do so previously, except in the cases noted in parenthesis ; but during his statement, I had, unnoticed by him, taken notes as to some particular circumstances, and, having the advantage of his statement before me in writing, on the evening of the third day that I had been with him, I began a cross-examination, and found his statement corroborated by every

circumstance coming within my own knowledge, or the confessions of others who had been either killed or executed, and whom he had not seen or had any knowledge of since the 22d of August last. He expressed himself fully satisfied as to the impracticability of his attempt. It has been said he was ignorant and cowardly, and that his object was to murder and rob for the purpose of obtaining money to make his escape. It is notorious that he was never known to have a dollar in his life, to swear an oath, or drink a drop of spirits. As to his ignorance, he certainly never had the advantages of education, but he can read and write (it was taught him by his parents), and for natural intelligence and quickness of apprehension is surpassed by few men I have ever seen. As to his being a coward, his reason as given for not resisting Mr. Phipps shows the decision of his character. When he saw Mr. Phipps present his gun, he said he knew it was impossible for him to escape, as the woods were full of men ; he therefore thought it was better to surrender, and trust to fortune for his escape. He is a complete fanatic, or plays his part most admirably. On other subjects he possesses an uncommon share of intelligence, with a mind capable of attaining anything, but warped and perverted by the influence of early impressions. He is below the ordinary stature, though strong and active, having the true negro face, every feature of which is strongly marked. I shall not attempt to describe the effect of his narrative, as told and commented on by himself, in the condemned hole of the prison. The calm, deliberate composure with which he spoke of his late deeds and intentions ; the expression of his fiend-like face when excited by enthusiasm, still bearing the stains of the blood of helpless innocence about him ; clothed with rags and covered with chains, yet daring to raise his manacled hands to heaven, with a spirit soaring above the attributes of man. I looked on him, and my blood curdled in my veins.

APPENDIX II.

THE chapter headed *Jegar Sahadutha* contains some terrible stories. It is to be said, they are all facts on judicial record, of the most fiend-like cruelty, terminating in the death of the victim, where the affair has been judicially examined, and the perpetrator escaped death, and in most cases *any* punishment for his crime.

1. Case of Souther.

“*Souther v. The Commonwealth.* 7 *Grattan*, 673, 1851.

“The killing of a slave by his master and owner, by wilful and excessive whipping, is murder in the first degree: though it may not have been the purpose and intention of the master and owner to kill the slave.

“Simon Souther was indicted at the October term, 1850, of the Circuit Court for the County of Hanover, for the murder of his own slave. The indictment contained fifteen counts, in which the various modes of punishment and torture by which the homicide was charged to have been committed were stated singly, and in various combinations. The fifteenth count unites them all: and, as the court certifies that the *indictment was sustained by the evidence*, the giving the facts stated in that count will show what was the charge against the prisoner, and what was the proof to sustain it.

“The count charged that on the 1st day of September, 1849, the prisoner tied his negro slave, Sam, with ropes about his wrists, neck, body, legs, and ankles, to a tree. That whilst so tied, the prisoner first whipped the slave with switches. That he next beat and clobbered the slave with a shingle, and compelled two of his slaves, a man and a woman, also to cob the deceased with the shingle. That whilst the deceased was so tied to the tree, the prisoner did strike, knock, kick, stamp, and beat him upon various parts of his head, face, and body; that he applied fire to his body; * * * * that he then washed his body with warm water, in which pods of red pepper had been put and steeped; and he compelled his two slaves aforesaid also to wash him with this same preparation of warm water and red pepper. That after the tying, whipping, clobbering, striking, beating, knocking, kicking, stamping, wounding, bruising, lacerating, burning, washing, and torturing, as aforesaid, the prisoner untied the deceased from the tree in such a way as to throw him with violence to the ground; and he then and there did knock, kick, stamp, and beat the deceased upon his head, temples, and various parts of his body. That the prisoner then had the deceased carried into a shed-room of his house, and there he compelled one of his slaves, in his presence, to confine the deceased's feet in stocks, by making his legs fast

to a piece of timber, and to tie a rope about the neck of the deceased, and fasten it to a bed-post in the room, thereby strangling, choking, and suffocating, the deceased. And that whilst the deceased was thus made fast in stocks, as aforesaid, the prisoner did kick, knock, stamp, and beat him upon his head, face, breast, belly, sides, back, and body ; and he again compelled his two slaves to apply fire to the body of the deceased, whilst he was so made fast as aforesaid. And the count charged that from these various modes of punishment and torture, the slave Sam then and there died. It appeared that the prisoner commenced the punishment of the deceased in the morning, and that it was continued throughout the day ; and that the deceased died in the presence of the prisoner, and one of his slaves, and one of the witnesses, whilst the punishment was still progressing.

“ Field J. delivered the opinion of the court.

“ The prisoner was indicted and convicted of *murder in the second degree*, in the Circuit Court of Hanover, at its April term last past, and was sentenced to the *penitentiary for five years*, the period of time ascertained by the jury. The murder consisted in the killing of a negro man-slave by the name of Sam, the property of the prisoner, by cruel and excessive whipping and torture, inflicted by Souther, aided by two of his other slaves, on the 1st day of September, 1849. The prisoner moved for a new trial, upon the ground that the offence, *if any*, amounted only to manslaughter. The motion for a new trial was overruled, and a bill of exceptions taken to the opinion of the court, setting forth the facts proved, or as many of them as were deemed material for the consideration of the application for a new trial. The bill of exception states : That the slave Sam, in the indictment mentioned, was the slave and property of the prisoner. That for the purpose of chastising the slave for the offence of getting drunk, and dealing, as the slave confessed and alleged, with Henry and Stone, two of the witnesses for the Commonwealth, he caused him to be tied and punished in the presence of the said witnesses, with the exception of slight whipping with peach or apple tree switches, before the said witnesses arrived at the scene after they were sent for by the prisoner (who were present by request from the defendant), and of several slaves of the prisoner, in the manner and by the means charged in the indictment ; and the said slave died under and from the infliction of the said punishment, in the presence of the prisoner, one of his slaves, and of one of the witnesses for the Commonwealth. But it did not appear that it was the design of the prisoner to kill the said slave, unless such design be properly inferable from the manner, means, and duration, of the punishment. And, on the contrary, it did appear that the prisoner frequently declared, while the said slave was undergoing the punishment, that he believed the said slave was feigning, and pretending to be suffering and injured when he was not. The judge certifies that the slave was punished in the *manner and by the means charged in the indictment*. The

indictment contains fifteen counts, and sets forth a case of the most cruel and excessive whipping and torture. * * *

“It is believed that the records of criminal jurisprudence do not contain a case of more atrocious and wicked cruelty than was presented upon the trial of Souther; and yet it has been gravely and earnestly contended here by his counsel that his offence amounts to manslaughter only.

“It has been contended by the counsel of the prisoner that a man cannot be indicted and prosecuted for the cruel and excessive whipping of his own slave. That it is lawful for the master to chastise his slave, and that if death ensues from such chastisement, unless it was intended to produce death, it is like the case of homicide which is committed by a man in the performance of a lawful act, which is manslaughter only. It has been decided by this court in Turner’s case, 5 Rand., that the owner of a slave, for the malicious, cruel, and excessive beating of his own slave, cannot be indicted; yet it by no means follows, when such malicious, cruel, and excessive beating results in death, though not intended and premeditated, that the beating is to be regarded as lawful for the purpose of reducing the crime to manslaughter, when the whipping is inflicted for the sole purpose of chastisement. *It is the policy of the law, in respect to the relation of master and slave, and for the sake of securing proper subordination and obedience on the part of the slave, to protect the master from prosecution in all such cases, even if the whipping and punishment be malicious, cruel, and excessive.* But in so inflicting punishment for the sake of punishment, the owner of the slave acts at his peril; and if death ensues in consequence of such punishment, the relation of master and slave affords no ground of excuse or palliation. The principles of the common law, in relation to homicide, apply to his case without qualification or exception; and, according to those principles, the act of the prisoner, in the case under consideration, amounted to murder. * * * The crime of the prisoner is not manslaughter, but murder in the first degree.”

2. Death of Hark.

The master is, as we have asserted, protected from prosecution by express enactment, if the victim dies in the act of resistance to his will, or under moderate correction.

“Whereas by another Act of the Assembly, passed in 1774, the killing of a slave, however wanton, cruel, and deliberate, is only punishable in the first instance by imprisonment and paying the value thereof to the owner, which *distinction of criminality between the murder of a white person and one who is equally a human creature, but merely of a different complexion, is DISGRACEFUL TO HUMANITY, AND DEGRADING IN THE HIGHEST DEGREE TO THE LAWS AND PRINCIPLES OF A FREE, CHRISTIAN, AND ENLIGHTENED COUNTRY, Be it enacted, &c., That if any person shall here-*

after be guilty of wilfully and maliciously killing a slave, such offender shall, upon the first conviction thereof, be adjudged guilty of murder, and shall suffer the same punishment as if he had killed a free man : *Provided always, this act shall not extend to the person killing a slave OUTLAWED BY VIRTUE OF ANY ACT OF ASSEMBLY OF THIS STATE, or to any slave in the act of resistance to his lawful owner or master, or to any slave dying under moderate correction.*”

Instance in point ;—

“*From the ‘National Era,’ Washington, November 6, 1851.*

“HOMICIDE CASE IN CLARKE COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

“Some time since, the newspapers of Virginia contained an account of a horrible tragedy, enacted in Clarke County, of that state. A slave of Colonel James Castleman, it was stated, had been chained by the neck, and whipped to death by his master, on the charge of stealing. The whole neighborhood in which the transaction occurred was incensed ; the Virginia papers abounded in denunciations of the cruel act ; and the people of the North were called upon to bear witness to the justice which would surely be meted out in a slave state to the master of a slave. We did not publish the account. The case was horrible ; it was, we were confident, exceptional. It should not be taken as evidence of the general treatment of slaves. We chose to delay any notice of it till the courts should pronounce their judgment, and we could announce at once the crime and its punishment, so that the state might stand acquitted of the foul deed.

“Those who were so shocked at the transaction will be surprised and mortified to hear that the actors in it have been tried and *acquitted* ! and when they read the following account of the trial and verdict, published at the instance of the friends of the accused, their mortification will deepen into bitter indignation.

“*From the ‘Spirit of Jefferson.’*

““COLONEL JAMES CASTLEMAN.—The following statement, understood to have been drawn up by counsel, since the trial, has been placed by the friends of this gentleman in our hands for publication :

““At the Circuit Superior Court of Clarke County, commencing on the 13th of October, Judge Samuels presiding, James Castleman and his son Stephen D. Castleman were indicted jointly for the murder of negro Lewis, property of the latter. By advice of their counsel, the parties elected to be tried separately, and the attorney for the Commonwealth directed that James Castleman should be tried first.

““It was proved, on this trial, that for many months previous to the occurrence the money-drawer of the tavern kept by Stephen D. Castleman, and the liquors kept in large quantities in his cellar, had been pillaged

from time to time, until the thefts had attained to a considerable amount. Suspicion had, from various causes, been directed to Lewis, and another negro, named Reuben (a blacksmith), the property of James Castleman ; but, by the aid of two of the house-servants, they had eluded the most vigilant watch.

“On the 20th of August last, in the afternoon, S. D. Castleman accidentally discovered a clue, by means of which, and through one of the house-servants implicated, he was enabled fully to detect the depredators, and to ascertain the manner in which the theft had been committed. He immediately sent for his father, living near him, and, after communicating what he had discovered, it was determined that the offenders should be punished at once, and before they should know of the discovery that had been made.

“Lewis was punished first ; and in a manner, as was fully shown, to preclude all risk of injury to his person, by stripes with a broad leathern strap. He was punished severely, but to an extent by no means disproportionate to his offence ; nor was it pretended, in any quarter, that this punishment implicated either his life or health. He confessed the offence, and admitted that it had been effected by false keys, furnished by the blacksmith, Reuben.

“The latter servant was punished immediately afterwards. It was believed that he was the principal offender, and he was found to be more obdurate and contumacious than Lewis had been in reference to the offence. Thus it was proved, both by the prosecution and the defence, that he was punished with greater severity than his accomplice. It resulted in a like confession on his part, and he produced the false key, one fashioned by himself, by which the theft had been effected.

“It was further shown, on the trial, that Lewis was whipped in the upper room of a warehouse, connected with Stephen Castleman’s store, and near the public road, where he was at work at the time ; that after he had been flogged, to secure his person, whilst they went after Reuben, he was confined by a chain around his neck, which was attached to a joist above his head. The length of this chain, the breadth and thickness of the joist, its height from the floor, and the circlet of chain on the neck, were accurately measured ; and it was thus shown that the chain unoccupied by the circlet and the joist was a foot and a half longer than the space between the shoulders of the man and the joist above, or to that extent the chain hung loose above him ; that the circlet (which was fastened so as to prevent its contraction) rested on the shoulders and breast, the chain being sufficiently drawn only to prevent being slipped over his head, and that there was no other place in the room to which he could be fastened except to one of the joists above. His hands were tied in front ; a white man, who had been at work with Lewis during the day, was left with him by the Messrs. Castleman, the better to insure his detention, whilst they were absent after

Reuben. It was proved by this man (who was a witness for the prosecution) that Lewis asked for a box to stand on, or for something that he could jump off from ; that after the Castlemans had left him he expressed a fear that when they came back he would be whipped again ; and said, if he had a knife, and could get one hand loose, he would cut his throat. The witness stated that the negro " stood firm on his feet," that he could turn freely in whatever direction he wished, and that he made no complaint of the mode of his confinement. This man stated that he remained with Lewis about half an hour, and then left there to go home.

" " After punishing Reuben, the Castlemans returned to the warehouse, bringing him with them ; their object being to confront the two men, in the hope that by further examination of them jointly all their accomplices might be detected.

" " They were not absent more than half an hour. When they entered the room above, Lewis was found hanging by the neck, his feet thrown behind him, his knees a few inches from the floor, and his head thrown forward, — the body warm and supple (or relaxed), but life was extinct.

" " It was proved by the surgeons who made a post-mortem examination before the coroner's inquest that the death was caused by strangulation by hanging ; and other eminent surgeons were examined to show, from the appearance of the brain and its blood-vessels after death (as exhibited at the post-mortem examination), that the subject could not have fainted before strangulation.

" " After the evidence was finished on both sides, the jury, from their box, and of their own motion, without a word from counsel on either side, informed the court that they had agreed upon their verdict. The counsel assented to its being thus received, and a verdict of "*Not guilty*" was immediately rendered. The attorney for the commonwealth then informed the court that all the evidence for the prosecution had been laid before the jury ; and, as no new evidence could be offered on the trial of Stephen D. Castleman, he submitted to the court the propriety of entering a *nolle prosequi*. The judge replied that the case had been fully and fairly laid before the jury upon the evidence ; that the court was not only satisfied with the verdict, but, if any other had been rendered, it must have been set aside ; and that, if no further evidence was to be adduced on the trial of Stephen, the attorney for the commonwealth would exercise a proper discretion in entering a *nolle prosequi* as to him, and the court would approve its being done. A *nolle prosequi* was entered accordingly, and both gentlemen discharged.

" " It may be added that two days were consumed in exhibiting the evidence, and that the trial was by a jury of Clark County. Both the parties had been on bail from the time of their arrest, and were continued on bail whilst the trial was depending.'

" " Let us admit that the evidence does not prove the legal crime of homi-

cide: what candid man can doubt, after reading this *ex parte* version of it, that the slave died in consequence of the punishment inflicted upon him?

"In criminal prosecutions the federal constitution guarantees to the accused the right to a public trial by an impartial jury; the right to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witness in his favor; and to have the assistance of counsel; guarantees necessary to secure innocence against hasty or vindictive judgment, — absolutely necessary to prevent injustice. Grant that they were not intended for slaves; every master of a slave must feel that they are still morally binding upon him. He is the sole judge; he alone determines the offence, the proof requisite to establish it, and the amount of the punishment. The slave, then, has a peculiar claim upon him for justice. When charged with a crime, common humanity requires that he should be informed of it, that he should be confronted with the witnesses against him, that he should be permitted to show evidence in favor of his innocence.

"But how was poor Lewis treated? The son of Castleman said he had discovered who stole the money; and it was forthwith 'determined that the offenders should be punished at once, and *before they should know of the discovery that had been made.*' Punished without a hearing! Punished on the testimony of a house-servant, the nature of which does not appear to have been inquired into by the court! Not a word is said which authorizes the belief that any careful examination was made, as it respects their guilt. Lewis and Reuben were assumed, on loose evidence, without deliberate investigation, to be guilty; and then, without allowing them to attempt to show their evidence, they were whipped until a confession of guilt was extorted by bodily pain.

"Is this Virginia justice?"

"*To the Editor of the Era:*

"I see that Castleman, who lately had a trial for whipping a slave to death in Virginia, was "*triumphantly acquitted,*" — as many expected. There are three persons in this city, with whom I am acquainted, who staid at Castleman's the same night in which this awful tragedy was enacted. They heard the dreadful lashing, and the heartrending screams and entreaties of the sufferer. They implored the only white man they could find on the premises, not engaged in the bloody work, to interpose, but for a long time he refused, on the ground that he was a dependant, and was afraid to give offence; and that, moreover, they had been drinking, and he was in fear for his own life, should he say a word that would be displeasing to them. He did, however, venture, and returned and reported the cruel manner in which the slaves were chained, and lashed, and secured in a blacksmith's vice. In the morning, when they ascertained that one of the slaves was dead, they were so shocked and indignant that they refused to

eat in the house, and reproached Castleman with his cruelty. He expressed his regret that the slave had died, and especially as he had ascertained that he *was innocent* of the accusation for which he had suffered. The idea was that he had fainted from exhaustion ; and, the chain being round his neck, he was strangled. The persons I refer to are themselves slaveholders ; but their feelings were so harrowed and lacerated that they could not sleep (two of them are ladies), and for many nights afterwards their rest was disturbed, and their dreams made frightful, by the appalling recollection.

“ ‘These persons would have been material witnesses, and would have willingly attended on the part of the prosecution. The knowledge they had of the case was communicated to the proper authorities, yet their attendance was not required. The only witness was that dependant who considered his own life in danger. Yours, &c., J. F.’

The Law of Outlawry.

Revised Statutes of North Carolina, chap. cxi., sect. 22 :

“ ‘Whereas, MANY TIMES *slaves run away and lie out, hid and lurking in swamps, woods, and other obscure places*, killing cattle and hogs, and committing other injuries to the inhabitants of this state ; in all such cases, upon intelligence of any slave or slaves lying out as aforesaid, any two justices of the peace for the county wherein such slave or slaves is or are supposed to lurk or do mischief, shall, and they are hereby empowered and required to issue proclamation against such slave or slaves (reciting his or their names, and the name or names of the owner or owners, if known), thereby requiring him or them, and every of them, forthwith to surrender him or themselves ; and also to empower and require the sheriff of the said county to take such power with him as he shall think fit and necessary for going in search and pursuit of, and effectually apprehending, such outlying slave or slaves ; which proclamation shall be published at the door of the court-house, and at such other places as said justices shall direct. And if any slave or slaves, against whom proclamation hath been thus issued, stay out, and do not immediately return home, it shall be lawful for any person or persons whatsoever to kill and destroy such slave or slaves by *such ways and means as he shall think fit*, without accusation or impeachment of any crime for the same.’

“ ‘STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, LENOIR COUNTY. — Whereas complaint hath been this day made to us, two of the justices of the peace for the said county, by William D. Cobb, of Jones County, that two negro slaves belonging to him, named Ben (commonly known by the name of Ben Fox) and Rigdon, have absented themselves from their said master’s service, and are lurking about in the Counties of Lenoir and Jones, committing acts of felony ; these are, in the name of the state, to command the said slaves forthwith to surrender themselves, and turn home to their said master.

And we do hereby also require the sheriff of said County of Lenoir to make diligent search and pursuit after the above-mentioned slaves. . . . And we do hereby, by virtue of an act of assembly of this state concerning servants and slaves, intimate and declare, if the said slaves do not surrender themselves and return home to their master immediately after the publication of these presents, that any person may kill or destroy said slaves by such means as he or they think fit, without accusation or impeachment of any crime or offence for so doing, or without incurring any penalty of forfeiture thereby.

“ ‘ Given under our hands and seals, this 12th of November, 1836.

“ ‘ B. COLEMAN, J. P. [Seal.]

“ ‘ JAS. JONES, J. P.’ [Seal.]

“ ‘ \$200 REWARD. — Ran away from the subscriber, about three years ago, a certain negro man, named Ben, commonly known by the name of Ben Fox ; also one other negro, by the name of Rigdon, who ran away on the eighth of this month.

“ ‘ I will give the reward of one hundred dollars for each of the above negroes, to be delivered to me, or confined in the jail of Lenoir or Jones County, or for the killing of them, so that I can see them.

“ ‘ November 12, 1836.

W. D. COBB.’

“ That this act was *not* a dead letter, also, was plainly implied in the protective act first quoted. If slaves were not, as a matter of fact, ever outlawed, why does the act formally recognize such a class? — ‘ provided that this act shall not extend to the killing of any slave *outlawed* by any act of the assembly.’ This language sufficiently indicates the existence of the custom.

“ Further than this, the statute-book of 1821 contained two acts : the first of which provides that all masters, in certain counties, who have had slaves killed in consequence of outlawry, shall have a claim on the treasury of the state for their value, unless cruel treatment of the slave be proved on the part of the master ; the second act extends the benefits of the latter provision to all the counties in the state.

“ Finally there is evidence that this act of outlawry was executed so recently as the year 1850, — the year in which ‘ Uncle Tom’s Cabin ’ was written. See the following from the *Wilmington Journal* of December 13, 1850.

“ ‘ STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, NEW HANOVER COUNTY. — Whereas complaint, upon oath, hath this day been made to us, two of the justices of the peace for the said state and county aforesaid, by Guilford Horn, of Edgecombe County, that a certain male slave belonging to him, named Harry, a carpenter by trade, about forty years old, five feet five inches high, or thereabouts ; yellow complexion ; stout built ; with a scar on his

left leg (from the cut of an axe) ; has very thick lips ; eyes deep sunk in his head ; forehead very square ; tolerably loud voice ; has lost one or two of his upper teeth ; and has a very dark spot on his jaw, supposed to be a mark, — hath absented himself from his master's service, and is supposed to be lurking about in this county, committing acts of felony or other misdeeds ; these are, therefore, in the name of state aforesaid, to command the said slave forthwith to surrender himself and return home to his said master ; and we do hereby, by virtue of the act of assembly in such cases made and provided, intimate and declare that if the said slave Harry doth not surrender himself and return home immediately after the publication of these presents, that any person or persons may KILL and DESTROY the said slave by such means as he or they may think fit, without accusation or impeachment of any crime or offence in so doing, and without incurring any penalty or forfeiture thereby.

“ ‘ Given under our hands and seals, this 29th day of June, 1850.

“ ‘ JAMES T. MILLER, J. P. [Seal.]

“ ‘ W. C. BETTENCOURT, J. P.’ [Seal.]

“ ‘ ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS REWARD will be paid for the delivery of the said Harry to me at Tosnott Depot, Edgecombe County, or for his confinement in any jail in the state, so that I can get him ; or *One Hundred and Fifty Dollars will be given for his head.*

“ ‘ He was lately heard from in Newbern, where he called himself Henry Barnes (or Burns), and will be likely to continue the same name, or assume that of Copage or Farmer. He has a free mulatto woman for a wife, by the name of Sally Bozeman, who has lately removed to Wilmington, and lives in that part of the town called Texas, where he will likely be lurking.

“ ‘ Masters of vessels are particularly cautioned against harboring or concealing the said negro on board their vessels, as the full penalty of the law will be rigorously enforced. GUILFORD HORN.

“ ‘ *June 29th, 1850.* ’ ”

This last advertisement was cut by the author from the *Wilmington Journal*, December 13th, 1850, a paper published in Wilmington, North Carolina.

APPENDIX III.

CHURCH ACTION ON SLAVERY.

IN reference to this important subject, we present a few extracts from the first and second chapters of the fourth part of the "Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin :"

Let us review the declarations that have been made in the Southern church, and see what principles have been established by them :

1. That slavery is an innocent and lawful relation, as much as that of parent and child, husband and wife, or any other lawful relation of society. (Harmony Pres., S. C.)

2. That it is consistent with the most fraternal regard for the good of the slave. (Charleston Union Pres., S. C.)

3. That masters ought not to be disciplined for selling slaves without their consent. (New School Pres. Church, Petersburg, Va.)

4. That the right to buy, sell, and hold men for purposes of gain, was given by express permission of God. (James Smylie and his Presbyteries.)

5. That the laws which forbid the education of the slave are right, and meet the approbation of the reflecting part of the Christian community. (Ibid.)

6. That the fact of slavery is not a question of morals at all, but is purely one of political economy. (Charleston Baptist Association.)

7. The right of masters to dispose of the time of their slaves has been distinctly recognized by the Creator of all things. (Ibid.)

8. That slavery, as it exists in these United States, is not a moral evil. (Georgia Conference, Methodist.)

9. That, without a new revelation from heaven, no man is entitled to pronounce slavery wrong.

10. That the separation of slaves by sale should be regarded as separation by death, and the parties allowed to marry again. (Shiloh Baptist Ass., and Savannah River Ass.)

11. That the testimony of colored members of the churches shall not be taken against a white person. (Methodist Church.)

In addition, it has been plainly avowed, by the expressed principles and practice of Christians of various denominations, that they regard it right and proper to put down all inquiry upon this subject by Lynch law.

The Old School Presbyterian Church, in whose communion the greater part of the slaveholding Presbyterians of the South are found, has never felt called upon to discipline its members for upholding a system which de-

nies legal marriage to all slaves. Yet this church was agitated to its very foundation by the discussion of a question of morals which an impartial observer would probably consider of far less magnitude, namely, whether a man might lawfully marry his deceased wife's sister. For the time, all the strength and attention of the church seemed concentrated upon this important subject. The trial went from Presbytery to Synod, and from Synod to General Assembly ; and ended with deposing a very respectable minister for this crime.

Rev. Robert J. Breckenridge, D.D., a member of the Old School Assembly, has thus described the state of the slave population as to their marriage relations :

“The system of slavery denies to a whole class of human beings the sacredness of marriage and of home, compelling them to live in a state of concubinage ; for, in the eye of the law, no colored slave-man is the husband of any wife in particular, nor any slave-woman the wife of any husband in particular ; no slave-man is the father of any child in particular, and no slave-child is the child of any parent in particular.”

Now, had this church considered the fact that three millions of men and women were, by the laws of the land, obliged to live in this manner, as of equally serious consequence, it is evident, from the ingenuity, argument, vehemence, Biblical research, and untiring zeal, which they bestowed on Mr. McQueen's trial, that they could have made a very strong case with regard to this also.

The history of the united action of denominations which included churches both in the slave and free states is a melancholy exemplification, to a reflecting mind, of that gradual deterioration of the moral sense which results from admitting any compromise, however slight, with an acknowledged sin. The best minds in the world cannot bear such a familiarity without injury to the moral sense. The facts of the slave system and of the slave laws, when presented to disinterested judges in Europe, have excited a universal outburst of horror ; yet, in assemblies composed of the wisest and best clergymen of America, these things have been discussed from year to year, and yet brought no results that have, in the slightest degree, lessened the evil. The reason is this. A portion of the members of these bodies had pledged themselves to sustain the system, and peremptorily to refuse and put down all discussion of it ; and the other part of the body did not consider this stand so taken as being of sufficiently vital consequence to authorize separation.

Nobody will doubt that, had the Southern members taken such a stand against the divinity of our Lord, the division would have been immediate and unanimous ; but yet the Southern members do maintain the right to buy and sell, lease, hire, and mortgage, multitudes of men and women, whom, with the same breath, they declare to be members of their churches, and true Christians. The Bible declares of all such that they are the tem-

ples of the Holy Ghost ; that they are the members of Christ's body, of his flesh and bones. Is not the doctrine that men may lawfully sell the members of Christ, his body, his flesh and bones, for purposes of gain, as really a heresy as the denial of the divinity of Christ? and is it not a dishonor to Him who is over all, God blessed forever, to tolerate this dreadful opinion, with its more dreadful consequences, while the smallest heresies concerning the imputation of Adam's sin are pursued with eager vehemence? If the history of the action of all the bodies thus united can be traced downwards, we shall find that, by reason of this tolerance of an admitted sin, the anti-slavery testimony has every year grown weaker and weaker. If we look over the history of all denominations, we shall see that at first they used very stringent language with relation to slavery. This is particularly the case with the Methodist and Presbyterian bodies, and for that reason we select these two as examples. The Methodist Society, especially, as organized by John Wesley, was an anti-slavery society, and the Book of Discipline contained the most positive statutes against slaveholding. The history of the successive resolutions of the Conference of this church is very striking. In 1780, before the church was regularly organized in the United States, they resolved as follows :

“The conference acknowledges that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society ; contrary to the dictates of conscience and true religion ; and doing what we would not others should do unto us.”

In 1784, when the church was fully organized, rules were adopted prescribing the times at which members who were already slaveholders should emancipate their slaves. These rules were succeeded by the following :

“Every person concerned, who will not comply with these rules, shall have liberty quietly to withdraw from our Society within the twelve months following the notice being given him, as aforesaid ; otherwise the assistants shall exclude him from the Society.

“No person holding slaves shall in future be admitted into the Society, or to the Lord's Supper, till he previously comply with these rules concerning slavery.

“Those who buy, sell, or give slaves away, unless on purpose to free them, shall be expelled immediately.”

In 1801 :

“We declare that we are more than ever convinced of the great evil of African slavery, which still exists in these United States.

“Every member of the Society who sells a slave shall immediately, after full proof, be excluded from the Society, etc.

“The Annual Conferences are directed to draw up addresses for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, to the legislature. Proper committees shall be appointed by the Annual Conference, out of the most respectable of our friends, for the conducting of the business ; and the presiding elders, dea-

cons, and travelling preachers, shall procure as many proper signatures as possible to the addresses, and give all the assistance in their power, in every respect, to aid the committees, and to further the blessed undertaking. Let this be continued from year to year, till the desired end be accomplished."

In 1836, let us notice the change. The General Conference held its annual session in Cincinnati, and resolved as follows :

"Resolved, by the delegates of the Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, that they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention, to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave, as it exists in the slaveholding States of this Union."

These resolutions were passed by a very large majority. An address was received from the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in England, affectionately remonstrating on the subject of slavery. The Conference refused to publish it. In the pastoral address to the churches are these passages :

"It cannot be unknown to you that the question of slavery in the United States, by the constitutional compact which binds us together as a nation, is left to be regulated by the several State Legislatures themselves ; and thereby is put beyond the control of the general government, as well as that of all ecclesiastical bodies, it being manifest that in the slaveholding States themselves the entire responsibility of its existence, or non-existence, rests with those State Legislatures. * * * * These facts, which are only mentioned here as a reason for the friendly admonition which we wish to give you, constrain us, as your pastors, who are called to watch over your souls, as they must give account, to exhort you to abstain from all abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications," etc. * * * * *

The subordinate conferences showed the same spirit.

In 1836, the New York Annual Conference resolved that no one should be elected a deacon or elder in the church unless he would give a pledge to the church that he would refrain from discussing this subject. *

In 1838, the Conference resolved —

"As the sense of this Conference, that any of its members, or probationers, who shall patronize *Zion's Watchman*, either by writing in commendation of its character, by circulating it, recommending it to our people, or procuring subscribers, or by collecting or remitting moneys, shall be deemed guilty of indiscretion, and dealt with accordingly."

It will be recollected that *Zion's Watchman* was edited by Le Roy Sunderland, for whose abduction the State of Alabama had offered fifty thousand dollars.

In 1840, the General Conference at Baltimore passed the resolution that we have already quoted, forbidding preachers to allow colored persons to

* This resolution is given in Birney's pamphlet.

give testimony in their churches. It has been computed that about eighty thousand people were deprived of the right of testimony by this Act. This Methodist Church subsequently broke into a Northern and Southern Conference. The Southern Conference is avowedly all pro-slavery, and the Northern Conference has still in its communion slaveholding conferences and members.

Of the Northern Conferences, one of the largest, the Baltimore, passed the following :

“Resolved, That this Conference disclaims having any fellowship with abolitionism. On the contrary, while it is determined to maintain its well-known and long-established position, by keeping the travelling preachers composing its own body free from slavery, it is also determined not to hold connection with any ecclesiastical body that shall make non-slaveholding a condition of membership in the church, but to stand by and maintain the discipline as it is.”

The following extract is made from an address of the Philadelphia Annual Conference to the Societies under its care, dated Wilmington, Delaware, April 7, 1847:

*“If the plan of separation gives us the pastoral care of you, it remains to inquire whether we have done anything, as a conference, or as men, to forfeit your confidence and affection. We are not advised that even in the great excitement which has distressed you for some months past, any one has impeached our moral conduct, or charged us with unsoundness in doctrine, or corruption or tyranny in the administration of discipline. But we learn that the simple cause of the unhappy excitement among you is, that some suspect us, or affect to suspect us, of being abolitionists. Yet no particular act of the Conference, or any particular member thereof, is adduced as the ground of the erroneous and injurious suspicion. We would ask you, brethren, whether the conduct of our ministry among you for sixty years past ought not to be sufficient to protect us from this charge. Whether the question we have been accustomed, for a few years past, to put to candidates for admission among us, namely, Are you an abolitionist? and, without each one answered in the negative, he was not received, ought not to protect us from the charge. Whether the action of the last Conference on this particular matter ought not to satisfy any fair and candid mind that we are not, and do not desire to be, abolitionists. * * * We cannot see how we can be regarded as abolitionists, without the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church South being considered in the same light. * * **

“Wishing you all heavenly benedictions, we are, dear brethren, yours, in Christ Jesus,

J. P. DURBIN,	} <i>Committee.”</i>
J. KENNADAY,	
IGNATIUS T. COOPER,	
WILLIAM H. GILDER,	
JOSEPH CASTLE,	

These facts sufficiently define the position of the Methodist church. The history is melancholy, but instructive. The history of the Presbyterian church is also of interest.

In 1793, the following note to the eighth commandment was inserted in the Book of Discipline, as expressing the doctrine of the church upon slaveholding :

“1 Tim. 1 : 10. — The law is made for MAN-STEALERS. This crime among the Jews exposed the perpetrators of it to capital punishment (Exodus 21 : 15) ; and the apostle here classes them with sinners of the first rank. The word he uses, in its original import, comprehends all who are concerned in bringing any of the human race into slavery, or in retaining them in it. *Hominum fures, qui servos vel liberos, abducunt, retinent, vendunt, vel emunt.* Stealers of men are all those who bring off slaves or freemen, and KEEP, SELL, or BUY THEM. To steal a free man, says Grotius, is the highest kind of theft. In other instances, we only steal human property ; but when we steal or retain men in slavery, we seize those who, in common with ourselves, are constituted by the original grant lords of the earth.”

No rules of church discipline were enforced, and members whom this passage declared guilty of this crime remained undisturbed in its communion, as ministers and elders. This inconsistency was obviated in 1816 by expunging the passage from the Book of Discipline. In 1818 it adopted an expression of its views on slavery. This document is a long one, conceived and written in a very Christian spirit. The Assembly's Digest says, page 341, that it was *unanimously* adopted. The following is its testimony as to the nature of slavery :

“We consider the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human race by another as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, as utterly inconsistent with the law of God which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the Gospel of Christ, which enjoin that ‘all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.’ Slavery creates a paradox in the moral system. It exhibits rational, accountable, and immortal beings in such circumstances as scarcely to leave them the power of moral action. It exhibits them as dependent on the will of others whether they shall receive religious instruction ; whether they shall know and worship the true God ; whether they shall enjoy the ordinances of the Gospel ; whether they shall perform the duties and cherish the endearments of husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbors and friends ; whether they shall preserve their chastity and purity, or regard the dictates of justice and humanity. Such are some of the consequences of slavery, — consequences not imaginary, but which connect themselves with its very existence. The evils to which the slave is always exposed often take place in fact, and in their very worst degree and form ; and where all of them do not take place, — as we rejoice to say that in many

instances, through the influence of the principles of humanity and religion on the minds of masters, they do not, — still the slave is deprived of his natural right, degraded as a human being, and exposed to the danger of passing into the hands of a master who may inflict upon him all the hardships and injuries which inhumanity and avarice may suggest.”

This language was surely decided, and it was *unanimously* adopted by slaveholders and non-slaveholders. Certainly one might think the time of redemption was drawing nigh. The declaration goes on to say :

“It is manifestly the duty of all Christians who enjoy the light of the present day, when the inconsistency of slavery both with the dictates of humanity and religion has been demonstrated, and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use honest, earnest, unwearied endeavors to correct the errors of former times, and as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to OBTAIN THE COMPLETE ABOLITION of slavery throughout Christendom and throughout the world.”

Here we have the Presbyterian Church, slaveholding and non-slaveholding, virtually formed into one great *abolition society*, as we have seen the Methodist was.

The Assembly then goes on to state that the slaves are not *at present* prepared to be free, — that they tenderly sympathize with the portion of the church and country that has had this evil entailed upon them, where, as they say, “a great and the most virtuous part of the community ABHOR SLAVERY, and wish ITS EXTERMINATION.” But they exhort them to commence immediately the work of instructing slaves, with a view to preparing them for freedom, and to let no greater delay take place than “a regard to public welfare *indispensably* demands ;” “to be governed by no other considerations than an *honest and impartial regard to the happiness of the injured party, uninfluenced by the expense and inconvenience* which such regard may involve.” It warns against “*unduly extending this plea of necessity,*” — against making it a cover for the *love and practice of slavery*. It ends by recommending that any one who shall sell a fellow-Christian without his consent be immediately disciplined and suspended.

If we consider that this was *unanimously* adopted by slaveholders and all, and grant, as we certainly do, that it was adopted in all honesty and good faith, we shall surely expect something from it. We should expect forthwith the organizing of a set of common schools for the slave children ; for an efficient religious ministration ; for an entire discontinuance of trading in Christian slaves ; for laws which make the family relations sacred. Was any such thing done or attempted ? Alas ! Two years after this, came the ADMISSION OF MISSOURI, and the increase of demand in the Southern slave-market, and the internal slave-trade. Instead of school-teachers, they had slave-traders ; instead of gathering *schools*, they gathered *slave-coffles*. Instead of building school-houses, they built slave-

pens and slave-prisons, jails, barracoons, factories, or whatever the trade pleases to term them ; and so went the plan of gradual emancipation.

In 1834, sixteen years after, a committee of the Synod of Kentucky, in which state slavery is generally said to exist in its mildest form, appointed to make a report on the condition of the slaves, gave the following picture of their condition. First, as to their spiritual condition, they say :

“ After making all reasonable allowances, our colored population can be considered, at the most, but semi-heathen.

“ Brutal stripes, and all the various kinds of personal indignities, are not the only species of cruelty which slavery licenses. The law does not recognize the family relations of the slave, and extends to him no protection in the enjoyment of domestic endearments. The members of a slave-family may be forcibly separated, so that they shall never more meet until the final judgment. And cupidity often induces the masters to practise what the law allows. Brothers and sisters, parents and children, husbands and wives, are torn asunder, and permitted to see each other no more. These acts are daily occurring in the midst of us. The shrieks and the agony often witnessed on such occasions proclaim with a trumpet-tongue the iniquity and cruelty of our system. The cries of these sufferers go up to the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. There is not a neighborhood where these heartrending scenes are not displayed. There is not a village or road that does not behold the sad procession of manacled outcasts, whose chains and mournful countenances tell that they are exiled by force from all that their hearts hold dear. Our church, years ago, raised its voice of solemn warning against this flagrant violation of every principle of mercy, justice, and humanity. Yet we blush to announce to you and to the world, that this warning has been often disregarded, even by those who hold to our communion. Cases have occurred, in our own denomination, where professors of the religion of mercy have torn the mother from her children, and sent her into a merciless and returnless exile. Yet acts of discipline have rarely followed such conduct.”

Hon. James G. Birney, for years a resident of Kentucky, in his pamphlet, amends the word *rarely* by substituting *never*. What could show more plainly the utter inefficiency of the past act of the Assembly, and the necessity of adopting some measures more efficient ? In 1835, therefore, the subject was urged upon the General Assembly, entreating them to carry out the principles and designs they had avowed in 1818.

Mr. Stuart, of Illinois, in a speech he made upon the subject, said :

“ I hope this Assembly are prepared to come out fully and declare their sentiments, that slaveholding is a most flagrant and heinous sin. Let us not pass it by in this indirect way, while so many thousands and tens of thousands of our fellow-creatures are writhing under the lash, often inflicted, too, by ministers and elders of the Presbyterian church.

* * * * *

"In this church a man may take a free-born child, force it away from its parents, to whom God gave it in charge, saying, 'Bring it up for me,' and sell it as a beast, or hold it in perpetual bondage, and not only escape corporal punishment, but really be esteemed an excellent Christian. Nay, even ministers of the Gospel and doctors of divinity may engage in this unholy traffic, and yet sustain their high and holy calling.

* * * * *

"Elders, ministers, and doctors of divinity, are, with both hands, engaged in the practice."

One would have thought facts like these, stated in a body of Christians, were enough to wake the dead; but, alas! we can become accustomed to very awful things. No action was taken upon these remonstrances, except to refer them to a committee, to be reported on at the next session, in 1836.

The moderator of the Assembly in 1836 was a slaveholder, Dr. T. S. Witherspoon, the same who said to the editor of the *Emancipator*, "I draw my warrant from the scriptures of the Old and New Testament to hold my slaves in bondage. The principle of holding the heathen in bondage is recognized by God. When the tardy process of the law is too long in redressing our grievances, we at the South have adopted the summary process of Judge Lynch."

The majority of the committee appointed made a report as follows:

"Whereas the subject of slavery is inseparably connected with the laws of many of the states in this Union, with which it is by no means proper for an ecclesiastical judicature to interfere, and involves many considerations in regard to which great diversity of opinion and intensity of feeling are known to exist in the churches represented in this Assembly; and whereas there is great reason to believe that any action on the part of this Assembly, in reference to this subject, would tend to distract and divide our churches, and would probably in no wise promote the benefit of those whose welfare is immediately contemplated in the memorials in question:

"Therefore, Resolved,

"1. That it is not expedient for the Assembly to take any further order in relation to this subject.

"2. That as the notes which have been expunged from our public formularies, and which some of the memorials referred to the committee request to have restored, were introduced irregularly, never had the sanction of the church, and, therefore, never possessed any authority, the General Assembly has no power, nor would they think it expedient, to assign them a place in the authorized standards of the church."

The minority of the committee, the Rev. Messrs. Dickey and Beman, reported as follows:

"Resolved, 1. That the buying, selling, or holding a human being as

property, is in the sight of God a heinous sin, and ought to subject the doer of it to the censures of the church.

“2. That it is the duty of every one, and especially of every Christian, who may be involved in this sin, to free himself from its entanglement without delay.

“3. That it is the duty of every one, especially of every Christian, in the meekness and firmness of the Gospel, to plead the cause of the poor and needy, by testifying against the principle and practice of slaveholding, and to use his best endeavors to deliver the church of God from the evil, and to bring about the emancipation of the slaves in these United States, and throughout the world.”

The slaveholding delegates, to the number of forty-eight, met *apart*, and *Resolved*,

“That if the General Assembly shall undertake to exercise authority on the subject of slavery, so as to make it an immorality, or shall in any way declare that Christians are criminal in holding slaves, that a declaration shall be presented by the Southern delegation declining their jurisdiction in the case, and our determination not to submit to such decision.”

In view of these conflicting reports, the Assembly resolved as follows :

“Inasmuch as the constitution of the Presbyterian church, in its preliminary and fundamental principles, declares that no church judicatories ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority ; and as the urgency of the business of the Assembly, and the shortness of the time during which they can continue in session, render it impossible to deliberate and decide judiciously on the subject of slavery in its relation to the church, therefore, Resolved, that this whole subject be indefinitely postponed.”

The amount of the slave-trade at the time when the General Assembly refused to act upon the subject of slavery at all may be inferred from the following items. The *Virginia Times*, in an article published in this very year of 1836, estimated the number of slaves exported for sale from that state alone, during the twelve months preceding, at forty thousand. The *Natchez (Miss.) Courier* says that in the same year the States of Alabama, Missouri, and Arkansas, imported two hundred and fifty thousand slaves from the more northern states. If we deduct from these all who may be supposed to have emigrated with their masters, still what an immense trade is here indicated !

Two years after, the General Assembly, by a sudden and very unexpected movement, passed a vote excinding, without trial, from the communion of the church, four synods, comprising the most active and decided anti-slavery portions of the church. The reasons alleged were, doctrinal differences and ecclesiastical practices inconsistent with Presbyterianism. By this act about five hundred ministers and sixty thousand members were cut off from the Presbyterian church.

That portion of the Presbyterian church called New School, considering this act unjust, refused to assent to it, joined the exscecinded synods, and formed themselves into the New School General Assembly. In this communion only three slaveholding presbyteries remained; in the old there were between thirty and forty.

The course of the Old School Assembly, after the separation, in relation to the subject of slavery, may be best expressed by quoting one of their resolutions, passed in 1845. Having some decided anti-slavery members in its body, and being, moreover, addressed on the subject of slavery by associated bodies, they presented, in this year, the following deliberate statement of their policy. (Minutes for 1845, p. 18.)

“*Resolved*, 1. That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was originally organized, and has since continued the bond of union in the church, upon the conceded principle that the existence of domestic slavery, under the circumstances in which it is found in the Southern portion of the country, is no bar to Christian communion.

“2. That the petitions that ask the Assembly to make the holding of slaves in itself a matter of discipline do virtually require this judicatory to dissolve itself, and abandon the organization under which, by the Divine blessing, it has so long prospered. The tendency is evidently to separate the Northern from the Southern portion of the church — a result which every good Christian must deplore; as tending to the dissolution of the Union of our beloved country, and which every enlightened Christian will oppose, as bringing about a ruinous and unnecessary schism between brethren who maintain a common faith.

“Yeas, Ministers and Elders, 168.

“Nays, “ “ “ 13.”

It is scarcely necessary to add a comment to this very explicit declaration. It is the plainest possible disclaimer of any protest against slavery; the plainest possible statement that the existence of the ecclesiastical organization is of more importance than all the moral and social considerations which are involved in a full defence and practice of American slavery.

The next year a large number of petitions and remonstrances were presented, requesting the Assembly to utter additional testimony against slavery.

In reply to the petitions, the General Assembly reëffirmed all their former testimonies on the subject of slavery for sixty years back, and also affirmed that the previous year's declaration must not be understood as a retraction of that testimony; in other words, they expressed it as their opinion, in the words of 1818, that slavery is “*wholly opposed to the law of God*,” and “*totally irreconcilable with the precepts of the Gospel of Christ*,” and yet that they “had formed their church organization upon the conceded principle that the existence of it, under the circumstances in which it is found in the Southern States of the Union, is no bar to Christian communion.”

Some members protested against this action. (Minutes, 1846. Overture No. 17.)

Great hopes were at first entertained of the New School body. As a body, it was composed mostly of anti-slavery men. It had in it those synods whose anti-slavery opinions and actions had been, to say the least, one very efficient cause for their excision from the Church. It had only three slaveholding Presbyteries. The power was all in its own hands. Now, if ever, was their time to cut this loathsome encumbrance wholly adrift, and stand up, in this age of concession and conformity to the world, a purely protesting church, free from all complicity with this most dreadful national immorality.

On the first session of the General Assembly this course was most vehemently urged, by many petitions and memorials. These memorials were referred to a committee of decided anti-slavery men. The argument on one side was, that the time was now come to take decided measures to cut free wholly from all pro-slavery complicity, and avow their principles with decision, even though it should repel all such churches from their communion as were not prepared for immediate emancipation.

On the other hand, the majority of the committee were urged by opposing considerations. The brethren from slave states made to them representations somewhat alike to these : " Brethren, our hearts are with you. We are with you in faith, in charity, in prayer. We sympathized in the injury that had been done you by excision. We stood by you then, and are ready to stand by you still. We have no sympathy with the party that have expelled you, and we do not wish to go back to them. As to this matter of slavery, we do not differ from you. We consider it an evil. We mourn and lament over it. We are trying, by gradual and peaceable means, to exclude it from our churches. We are going as far in advance of the sentiment of our churches as we consistently can. We cannot come up to more decided action without losing our hold over them, and, as we think, throwing back the cause of emancipation. If you begin in this decided manner, we cannot hold our churches in the union ; they will divide, and go to the Old School."

Here was a very strong plea, made by good and sincere men. It was an appeal, too, to the most generous feelings of the heart. It was, in effect, saying, " Brothers, we stood by you, and fought your battles, when everything was going against you ; and, now that you have the power in your hands, are you going to use it so as to cast us out ? "

These men, strong anti-slavery men as they were, were affected. One member of the committee foresaw and feared the result. He felt and suggested that the course proposed conceded the whole question. The majority thought, on the whole, that it was best to postpone the subject. The committee reported that the applicants, for reasons satisfactory to themselves, had withdrawn their papers.

The next year, in 1839, the subject was resumed ; and it was again urged that the Assembly should take high, and decided, and unmistakable ground ; and certainly, if we consider that all this time not a single church had emancipated its slaves, and that the power of the institution was everywhere stretching and growing and increasing, it would certainly seem that something more efficient was necessary than a general understanding that the church agreed with the testimony delivered in 1818. It was strongly represented that it was time something was done. This year the Assembly decided to refer the subject to Presbyteries, to do what they deemed advisable. The words employed were these : “ Solemnly referring the whole subject to the lower judicatories, to take such action as in their judgment is most judicious, and adapted to remove the evil.” The Rev. George Beecher moved to insert the word moral before evil ; they declined.*

This brought, in 1840, a much larger number of memorials and petitions ; and very strong attempts were made by the abolitionists to obtain some decided action.

The committee this year referred to what had been done last year, and declared it inexpedient to do anything further. The subject was indefinitely postponed. At this time it was resolved that the Assembly should meet only once in three years. Accordingly, it did not meet till 1843. In 1843, several memorials were again presented, and some resolutions offered to the Assembly, of which this was one (Minutes of the General Assembly for 1843, p. 15) :

“ Resolved, That we affectionately and earnestly urge upon the Ministers, Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods, connected with this Assembly, that they treat this as all other sins of great magnitude ; and by a diligent, kind, and faithful application of the means which God has given them, by instruction, remonstrance, reproof, and effective discipline, seek to purify the church of this great iniquity.”

This resolution they declined. They passed the following :

“ Whereas there is in this Assembly great diversity of opinion as to the proper and best mode of action on the subject of slavery ; and whereas, in such circumstances, any expression of sentiment would carry with it but little weight, as it would be passed by a small majority, and must operate to produce alienation and division ; and whereas the Assembly of 1839, with great unanimity, referred this whole subject to the lower judicatories, to take such order as in their judgment might be adapted to remove the evil ; — Resolved, That the Assembly do not think it for the edification of the church for this body to take any action on the subject.”

They, however, passed the following :

“ Resolved, That the fashionable amusement of promiscuous dancing is

* Goodell's History of the Great Struggle between Freedom and Slavery.

so entirely unscriptural, and eminently and exclusively that of 'the world which lieth in wickedness,' and so wholly inconsistent with the spirit of Christ, and with that propriety of Christian deportment and that purity of heart which his followers are bound to maintain, as to render it not only improper and injurious for professing Christians either to partake in it, or to qualify their children for it, by teaching them the 'art,' but also to call for the faithful and judicious exercise of discipline on the part of Church Sessions, when any of the members of their churches have been guilty."

Thus has the matter gone on from year to year, ever since.

In 1856 we are sorry to say that we can report no improvement in the action of the great ecclesiastical bodies on the subject of slavery, but rather deterioration. Notwithstanding all the aggressions of slavery, and notwithstanding the constant developments of its horrible influence in corrupting and degrading the character of the nation, as seen in the mean, vulgar, assassin-like outrages in our national Congress, and the brutal, blood-thirsty, fiend-like proceedings in Kansas, connived at and protected, if not directly sanctioned and in part instigated, by our national government; — notwithstanding all this, the great ecclesiastical organizations seem less disposed than ever before to take any efficient action on the subject. This was manifest in the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church North, held at Indianapolis during the spring of the present year, and in the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church, held at New York at about the same time.

True, a very large minority in the Methodist Conference resisted with great energy the action, or rather no action, of the majority, and gave fearless utterance to the most noble sentiments; but in the final result the numbers were against them.

The same thing was true to some extent in the New School Presbyterian General Assembly, though here the anti-slavery utterances were, on the whole, inferior to those in the Methodist Conference. In both bodies the Packthreads, and Cushings, and Oalkers, and Bonnies, are numerous, and have the predominant influence, while the Dicksons are fewer, and have far less power. The representations, therefore, in the body of the work, though very painful, are strictly just. Individuals, everywhere in the free states, and in some of the slave states, are most earnestly struggling against the prevailing corruption; but the churches, as such, are, for the most part, still unmoved. There are churches free from this stain, but they are neither numerous nor popular.

For an illustration of the lynching of Father Dickson, see "Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin," Part III., Chapter VIII.



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